

# *Horizons '83, Meet the Composer, and New Romanticism's New Marketplace*

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The New York Philharmonic was not entirely confident about the prospects for a new festival dedicated entirely to contemporary music, to be mounted over two weeks in June 1983. Although more than \$80,000 had been budgeted toward advertising and promotion—nearly a tenth of the festival's total anticipated expenses—advance ticket sales had been slow, perhaps demonstrating that despite recent aesthetic shifts in new music toward styles like minimalism and neo-Romanticism, audiences still felt that contemporary composition was inaccessible, academic, or full of alienating and atonal sounds. On the first night of the festival, dubbed Horizons '83, the Philharmonic had opened only one of its box office windows at Avery Fisher Hall. But, to everyone's surprise, a large audience soon appeared, and the queue for same-day tickets quickly stretched out into Lincoln Center's plaza. As the Philharmonic's composer-in-residence Jacob Druckman, who curated the Horizons festival, later described, "There were 1,500 people lined up around the square and we were frantically telephoning to get somebody to open up other windows."<sup>1</sup> Horizons '83 was a hit. It would go on to fill Avery Fisher Hall to an average of 70 percent capacity over the festival's six concerts: A major box office coup for contemporary music, and one comparable to the orchestra's ticket sales for standard fare like Beethoven or Mozart.

Such box office frenzy was in part the result of a deliberate question mark raised in the festival's subheading—"Horizons '83: Since 1968, A New Romanticism?"—and the furor it subsequently provoked within the press and among audiences. The diverse ways in which New Romanticism was defined and practiced at Horizons '83—as a new aesthetic movement in contemporary music, as a marketing term for Philharmonic administrators, and as a point for debate among music critics—created a productive tension: it generated enough buzz that the festival became an unprecedented sales phenomenon. But it was also the result of a major shift in

patronage in this period, spurred by the organization Meet the Composer and its multimillion-dollar Orchestra Residencies Program.

In this article, I argue that Horizons '83 and the success of its New Romanticism served as the flagship project of a major turn of American new music toward the marketplace and a broad, non-academic audience. Scholars have studied the rise of minimalism and neo-Romanticism in this period, and how their attendant postmodern aesthetics sought to recapture a mainstream U.S. public supposedly lost by the postwar avant-garde.<sup>2</sup> Drawing on previously unexamined archival material, interviews, and reception, I analyze the New York Philharmonic's 1983 Horizons festival to reveal how this turn to the audience was not only the result of stylistic shifts but also of institutional transformations. Indeed, a marketplace turn was the explicit goal of Meet the Composer in underwriting Horizons and other orchestral residencies across the United States. Examining how Druckman and the Philharmonic curated, publicized, and marketed New Romanticism provides an understanding of how the new marketplace imagined by Meet the Composer was executed in practice. And it has clear implications for the present day, in which orchestras varyingly attempt or resist integrating contemporary music into their programming while satisfying the demands of composers, critics, administrators, music directors, and listeners.

First, I will focus on the origins of Meet the Composer, its attempts to create a market for contemporary composition through its grant programs, and the transformative influence of its Orchestra Residencies Program. Then, I turn to Horizons '83 and its curatorial framework of New Romanticism, conceived by Druckman as an aesthetic vanguard, treated by Philharmonic administrators as a method to attract press attention and audiences, and received by critics as an opportunity for intensive debate about the future of the avant-garde. Finally, I will examine one significant limit of Horizons '83—its exclusion of black and female composers—and the implications that such discriminatory programming had for the emergence of the new marketplace. This too has lessons for the present day, in which American orchestras' failure to perform music by composers from historically underrepresented groups has elicited increasingly vocal opposition throughout the industry.

### **Patronage**

"We've been led to believe that to be a composer you must, of course, be dead!" the composer John Duffy declared in 1980.<sup>3</sup> "We've been told that music composition is an art of the gods—removed from everyday life and practiced somewhere in the land of heroes, saints and mighty mythical

geniuses with powdered wigs and marbled faces.” But Duffy saw the American composer as a figure much closer to home. “In reality there are thousands of concert, folk, jazz, theatre and dance composers alive and working in the United States,” he wrote. “They are fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters.” He described one solution to the composer’s seeming absence from society: the organization he founded in 1974, Meet the Composer, which aimed to facilitate contact between the composer and the public. In doing so, Meet the Composer attempted to reintroduce composers to the musical marketplace, and strengthen American composition as a profession.

Meet the Composer originated in the short-lived program *Composer in Performance*, sponsored by the New York State Council on the Arts (hereafter NYSCA) and supervised by composer Benjamin Patterson. Launched in 1969, *Composer in Performance* subsidized classical and jazz composers to perform, conduct, and/or attend concerts of their music. As Patterson wrote in 1970, the initiative sought to create

a new public image of the living composer. The old image of an ivory-towered dabbler, attending a rare performance of one of his works must be replaced by one of [an] involved person absolutely essential to, and at the core of the development of a healthy musical culture. We think this can be achieved through an increase in meaningful composer-audience contacts—by presenting the composer in an active and recreative relationship with his works, performing or directing.<sup>4</sup>

From its origins, *Composer in Performance* was intended to counteract the pervasive image of the American composer as an academic removed from concert life.

But by 1973, *Composer in Performance* had faltered due to mismanagement; a number of composers who had participated in the initiative, including Steve Reich, Milton Babbitt, Morton Feldman, and Cecil Taylor subsequently petitioned NYSCA to relaunch the program.<sup>5</sup> The prolific composer John Duffy, who had written scores for on- and off-Broadway plays and worked as a music director for several major theatrical organizations including the American Shakespeare Festival, was selected to supervise the new organization, in part because of his experience outside the academy. Renamed *Meet the Composer*, the program was funded with a grant of \$66,000 from NYSCA and was initially housed at the American Music Center. Because of its NYSCA backing, *Meet the Composer* (hereafter MTC) first focused on counties throughout New York State. But in 1978, Duffy and associate director Frances Richard incorporated MTC as an independent organization with its own board of directors and advisory

council, and by the early 1980s it had established enough state, federal, and private sponsorship to extend its granting nationwide.

The principal early effort of MTC was its Composers Performance Fund, which provided grants to nonprofits to invite composers to attend concerts of their music and talk to audiences. As 1984 MTC application guidelines stated, “The important ingredient is exchange between the composer and audience.”<sup>6</sup> Such interactions would bely not only stereotypes of the composer as deceased, but also the idea that the music of living composers was inaccessible or obscure. “If you see the person who’s actually written the music that you’re going to hear, you’re much more accepting of it, no matter what it is,” the composer Charles Wuorinen recalled of the program. “It becomes a social situation rather than some strange, esoteric experience.”<sup>7</sup> MTC also used its grants to leverage further support from organizations; a newsletter reported in 1979 that in the previous fiscal year \$123,000 MTC dollars had generated \$773,000 sponsor dollars in New York State alone.<sup>8</sup>

“Put into one sentence: MEET THE COMPOSER is helping create a marketplace for today’s composers,” Duffy wrote in a draft for a 1981 essay.<sup>9</sup> He saw the Composers Performance Fund as essential to the establishment of this market: only if composers were present at concerts and communicating with audiences would they build a market for their work. “In crass business terms, you display the wares,” he wrote. The public-facing nature of the program, in other words, would help justify composition as a paid profession. “The marketplace puts composers together with people,” Duffy continued. “By providing composers with wages it makes them professionals.” The twin goals of MTC were “to pay composers and put them together with people.”

Duffy described this market as directly opposed to the established model for a career in composition in the United States, that of the university:

Composers themselves have been culpable in perpetuating their obscurity and near demise. Many have opted for teaching posts in academe. This cloistered existence, though financially secure, cut them off from the general public. Unlike Bach and Verdi, the music they created was, in most part, not written for demand nor for public consumption, but for a private world of fellow academics and small cadres of earnest worshippers. . . . Their work fed on itself rather than on audience response. Their music turned inward—beyond the pale.<sup>10</sup>

The public context provided by MTC would pull composers away from what Duffy saw as the cloistered retreat of the American academy—the ideology of Milton Babbitt’s famous essay “Who Cares If You

Listen?”—and possibly even reorient their work aesthetically once it was in dialogue with a non-specialist audience.

Further, in part because of academic affiliations, at the time of MTC's creation the practice of paying composers a reasonable fee for new work was not widespread in the United States. Composer Libby Larsen said that at the Minnesota Orchestra in the early 1980s

their definition of a commission was, your piece gets performed. No money. And in America, that was the elephant in the room: the privilege of hearing your work. European composers were not putting up with that. But American composers, so many who were writing for orchestras, had professorships, and they just wanted to have their pieces played.<sup>11</sup>

She recalled that Duffy, however, strongly instilled in her the idea that “a composer is a professional” and that a commission “is to be compensated.”<sup>12</sup> Even though the Composers Performance Fund subsidized composers' attendance—not commissions themselves—MTC used the promise of its funding to push organizations to provide composers with compensation. As Richard said, “Most important of all was the whole idea that the composer has to be paid. . . . We told them, ‘If there's no fee, there's no commission.’”<sup>13</sup>

Two handbooks created by MTC contributed to this philosophy. In 1984, the organization issued *Commissioning Music*, a pamphlet for composers and patrons that included guidelines for potential commissioning fees; in 1989, it published *Composers in the Marketplace*, with basic information on copyright, performance, publishing, recordings, royalties, and promotion.<sup>14</sup> MTC's efforts shaped the work of other organizations; beginning in 1987, for example, NYSCA's program booklet for grant applications based its commission fee guidelines off research conducted by MTC.<sup>15</sup> As they shepherded composers into the marketplace, MTC helped guarantee that it was one based not on the exchange of favors but on the exchange of money.

The program was acclaimed by composers across the stylistic spectrum: Milton Babbitt heralded MTC for its “profound effects on the American musical climate . . . unprecedented and unparalleled in their effect and scope”; Tania León described MTC as “an inspiration, a mentor, a shoulder and a faithful teacher supporting those unspoken dreams in my creative endeavors”; and Ned Rorem wrote that “Meet the Composer has made the United States a finer and subtler land.”<sup>16</sup> Such praise was inspired, in part, by Meet the Composer's dramatic expansion. By 1984, a decade after its founding, Duffy had developed the total annual budget from its initial \$66,000 grant to over \$1 million.<sup>17</sup>

Much of that increase in funding can be attributed to MTC's most publicized and wide-reaching endeavor, the Orchestra Residencies Program. Within a two-week period in February 1981, Duffy received separate phone calls from Leonard Fleischer, a senior adviser for Exxon's arts philanthropy program, and Howard Klein, director of arts for the Rockefeller Foundation. By coincidence, both philanthropic administrators had been seeking potential avenues to strengthen the relationship between composers and the American orchestra. Klein had overseen a previous composer-in-residence initiative sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation from 1965 to 1972, but, as Michael Uy has shown, it was deemed a failure because of lack of interest among participant orchestras. A new partnership with Meet the Composer offered the opportunity to try again.<sup>18</sup>

Duffy was aware of how the relationship between orchestras and American composers had frayed by the 1980s. "Gone are the days of the Boston Symphony under Koussevitsky, the New York Philharmonic under Mitropoulos, the Philadelphia under Stokowski, the Chicago under Reiner, when the music of living composers was regularly commissioned and performed," he said in 1981. "Since the 1960s, the doors of the nation's orchestras have been virtually locked."<sup>19</sup> It had taken its toll. "Most younger composers felt that the orchestra was hopelessly out of reach, so instead they wrote electronic or chamber work," Duffy told the *New York Times* in 1996. "That was not a healthy musical situation."<sup>20</sup> After brainstorming with Fleischer and Klein, Duffy sought the advice of Ezra Laderman, director of the National Endowment for the Arts' music program, who promised federal funding for the potential initiative, and the beginnings of a program were conceived.

Duffy, Fleischer, and Klein consulted with composer John Adams—who had recently achieved national acclaim as New Music Adviser to the San Francisco Symphony—and subsequently sent a questionnaire to several hundred composers requesting their input on how to structure a residency program. A memo from Duffy to Fleischer, Klein, and Laderman in August 1981 argued that past residency programs had failed because composers "functioned on the fringe"; and thus they would seek to place the composer in close dialogue with music directors and administrators.<sup>21</sup> In the course of its research, MTC was surprised to learn that orchestra managers and conductors felt that they, too, would benefit from a resident composer program, which might "tap new audiences for orchestral concerts; increase subscription sales; revitalize orchestras; aid conductors and managers in selecting new works and coordinating New Music Series."<sup>22</sup>

As plans developed, the major financial stake proposed by Exxon and the Rockefeller Foundation for the program also helped open doors

with orchestra administrators otherwise uninterested in new music. Although public–private partnerships were at the core of American arts policy since the founding of the NEA, such a collaboration between corporations, foundations, and the federal government was also indicative of major shifts in patronage in this period. After abandoning an attempt to cut the 1982 budget of the NEA by 50 percent, President Reagan focused his arts policy primarily on motivating involvement from the private sector and rewarding corporate philanthropy. Exxon itself was awarded a National Medal of Arts by Reagan in 1986, a prize created in 1984 in part to honor private arts patrons.<sup>23</sup> Duffy acknowledged this growing importance of private sector philanthropy, describing corporations in a 1985 interview as “our 20th-century answer to Esterhazy and the Medicis.” He later called the Exxon-Rockefeller-NEA collaboration a “model public-private partnership” and “a stirring case of American enterprise.”<sup>24</sup>

In May 1982, Meet the Composer assembled a group of composers, music directors, and orchestra managers at the New York Philharmonic for a press luncheon to announce its ambitious plan. Beginning that September, six American orchestras would launch two-year composer-in-residence initiatives: John Adams with the San Francisco Symphony, Jacob Druckman with the New York Philharmonic, John Harbison with the Pittsburgh Symphony, Robert Xavier Rodriguez with the Dallas Symphony, William Kraft with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Joseph Schwantner with the St. Louis Symphony. (The Minnesota Orchestra, the seventh orchestra for the initial wave of the project, announced its residency with composers Libby Larsen and Stephen Paulus in early 1983.)

Each composer would write a major work for the orchestra; organize a new music series as part of the subscription season; assist music directors in reviewing scores and tapes, advising on programming, and preparing rehearsals; serve as a liaison to the composer community; and act as advocate for new music for the orchestra and its audience. Composers were expected to devote themselves to the orchestra as a full-time occupation, and received a \$40,000 annual salary for their work. (This was a substantive income, equivalent to approximately \$103,000 in 2019.) Orchestras agreed to premiere and record the commissioned work, assist the resident composer in executing the contemporary series, provide rehearsal time for new works, and promote the efforts of the program.

The budget for the endeavor was substantive. In its first five years, MTC’s total expenses for the residency program amounted to more than \$2 million (the equivalent of \$5 million today): the Rockefeller Foundation and Exxon each contributed \$875,000 to the residency program; the NEA contributed \$246,000; and various other foundations and corporations contributed \$91,000.<sup>25</sup> (The orchestras also contributed



*Figure 1.* Press conference for Orchestra Residencies Program, Lincoln Center, 1983. From left, Stephen Paulus, Libby Larsen, Robert Xavier Rodriguez, William Kraft, Jacob Druckman, John Duffy, John Adams, Joseph Schwantner, John Harbison. Photograph by Bial Bert, New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives, ID 800-116-09-002. Used by permission.

significantly to the residencies.) By 1987, Exxon had also spent an estimated \$250,000 on a national promotional campaign. Across the country, magazines and newspapers printed full-page ads that showed a composer assiduously at work at the piano with the tagline “Sometimes, it’s easier to compose a symphony than to get it performed.”<sup>26</sup>

For the ultimate aim of the Orchestra Residencies Program, such advertising was essential. As Duffy wrote to Fleischer, Klein, and Laderman in August 1981, “All agree that project must be widely promoted.” Citing the significant national press garnered by Adams with the San Francisco Symphony, he added, “The hoped-for result of the project and documentation of residencies is to encourage other orchestras to initiate residency programs.”<sup>27</sup> If an orchestra chose to renew its residency past the initial two-year term, MTC’s payment toward the composer’s salary would be halved; Duffy hoped to encourage orchestras to gradually take on the financial burden of the program, with the eventual goal of permanently endowing composers as members of their staff.

In 1985, after the first round of seven orchestras, the initiative expanded to include the Atlanta Symphony with Alvin Singleton, Houston Symphony with Tobias Picker, Indianapolis Symphony with Christopher



residencies with twenty-nine different composers had been mounted at twenty-one orchestras. Duffy compared composers to “a Johnny or Bessie Appleseed”: “People see on the program Leonard Slatkin, Music Director; Joan Tower, Composer in Residence; it immediately strikes them that the composer is part of the family.”<sup>29</sup>

Not every residency made for a happy family. In Pittsburgh, John Harbison found himself in the middle of a conflict between music director André Previn and orchestra management, spoke out publicly, and was fired; in Indianapolis, members of the symphony wore earplugs to protest the loud dynamics of resident composer Christopher Rouse’s music (one player in the ensemble even filed a complaint with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration), and he subsequently resigned. Charles Wuorinen arrived for a residency with the Louisville Orchestra in 1984 while the orchestra was on strike: the collaboration was called off, and he subsequently decamped to San Francisco to take over for Adams after his residency ended in 1985. But the program’s measurable successes outweighed such momentary failure. A 1992 MTC newsletter noted that two pieces premiered during residencies had netted Pulitzer Prizes; two had won Grawemeyer Awards; and two commission recordings, part of an MTC collaboration with Nonesuch, had climbed to high positions on *Billboard*’s classical charts.<sup>30</sup> The organization’s foundational agenda of providing grants in order to encourage other organizations to contribute matching funds had worked. For the total ten years of the program, MTC ultimately provided \$5.5 million, and the estimated contribution from participating orchestras was as high as \$21 million.<sup>31</sup>

American composers saw the residencies as enacting a cultural transformation. Joan Tower, who served as resident composer with the St. Louis Symphony from 1985 to 1988, wrote: “I know of no other program that has had as much impact and as significant a long-range consequence as the orchestral/composer/residency program.”<sup>32</sup> At a 1991 conference at the Rockefeller Foundation marking the conclusion of the residency program, composer George Perle—an elder figure associated with the postwar academic avant-garde, who had a residency with the San Francisco Symphony from 1989 to 1991—recalled: “A lot of people here are too young to remember what it was like before we had a residency program. There was a time when an American composer simply did not expect ever to get a performance with an American orchestra.”<sup>33</sup>

Such changes recalibrated the careers of composers who had already achieved orchestral renown, such as John Adams. His collaboration with the San Francisco Symphony as New Music Adviser began in 1979 while the composer was teaching at the San Francisco Conservatory, and his relationship with the orchestra developed as he was turning away from post-



without any institutional support, but rather living solely on commissions and royalties from a slowly growing catalog of works.”<sup>38</sup> His MTC residency commission became the large-scale work *Harmonielehre*, whose widely acclaimed premiere cemented Adams’s national reputation, and its Nonesuch recording reached the top ten of *Billboard*’s classical charts.

Not all resident composers found careers outside the academy. Druckman continued teaching at Yale, for example, and Joseph Schwantner, who moved his family to St. Louis for the duration of his three-year residency, returned to Rochester to teach at the Eastman School of Music when it concluded. But the financial support, public exposure, and administrative experience provided by the Orchestra Residencies Program set Adams on the path toward becoming, by 2016, the most widely performed living composer by American orchestras.<sup>39</sup>

### **New Romanticism**

It was no coincidence that the 1982 announcement of the initial round of orchestra residencies took place at the New York Philharmonic’s headquarters. Within a year of that first press conference, eight composers-in-residence returned to Lincoln Center for a forum open to the public to discuss the Orchestra Residencies Program. It was June 1983, and Exxon had paid for all of the resident composers to fly to New York to witness the beginning of a flagship MTC-sponsored project. Unlike every other MTC orchestra, the Philharmonic and its composer-in-residence Jacob Druckman had consolidated their season-long new music series into a two-week mega-festival titled *Horizons ’83: Since 1968, A New Romanticism?* The event coincided with the annual meeting of the Music Critics Association, which brought more than a hundred music writers to town.<sup>40</sup> If *Horizons* won over the critical establishment and New York’s audiences, it would cement the importance of the Orchestra Residencies Program nationwide.

The Philharmonic had an illustrious, if inconsistent, recent history with new music. Benjamin Piekut has documented how Leonard Bernstein’s Avant-Garde Festival in 1964 acted as a flashpoint for debate about contemporary composition; Pierre Boulez’s famous Rug Concerts of the 1970s attracted significant audiences for performances of new works.<sup>41</sup> Bernstein and Boulez were both established composers when they began their Philharmonic tenures as conductors, and saw themselves as liaisons from the world of living composers to that of the orchestra. But conductor Zubin Mehta, who assumed the mantle of Philharmonic music director in 1978 after Boulez, was not a composer. Though he frequently led performances of new music, Mehta did not command a strong reputation as a

new music advocate. Whereas in previous Philharmonic eras, contemporary work was a pet project of the music director, the Orchestra Residencies Program was an outside initiative, brought to the Philharmonic by MTC. The Horizons festivals were organized by an administrative committee including Druckman and Philharmonic managing director Albert K. Webster, with some input from Mehta.

The question posited by the festival's theme of "A New Romanticism?" reveals how its organizers embraced the fact that New Romanticism would mean different things to different people. Indeed, even within the committee that organized the festival, New Romanticism had multiple meanings associated with distinct but overlapping practices.<sup>42</sup> For Druckman, who initially proposed the theme, New Romanticism served to crystallize an aesthetic phenomenon that he had observed emerging over the previous two decades. For Webster, New Romanticism represented a powerful slogan that could attract controversy in the press and entice audience members who might otherwise shy away from contemporary music. And for the press that wrote in advance and after the concerts, New Romanticism provided fodder for debate around the future of art music, its potential to attract new listeners, and the potential death of the avant-garde.

Druckman theorized his curatorial framework for New Romanticism in an essay published in the glossy program book printed for the first Horizons festival. Despite what he described as an "ever-increasing diversity and a constant acceleration of technical and aesthetic change" in contemporary composition, Druckman identified a "steady underlying rhythm" present in music history. "This great and steady shift seems to happen repeatedly between two distinctly different artistic climates," he wrote. "On the one hand there is the Apollonian, the Classical—logical, rational, chaste and explainable; and on the other hand, the Dionysian, the Romantic—sensual, mysterious, ecstatic, transcending the explainable."<sup>43</sup> For Druckman, the twentieth century had been dominated by an Apollonian framework that encompassed Stravinsky's neoclassicism, Schoenberg's twelve-tone method, and the "post-Webern generation" of postwar serialism. But in the mid-1960s, he saw a New Romanticism emerging that instead embraced Dionysian "sensuality, mystery, nostalgia, ecstasy, transcendancy." Composers like Luciano Berio, György Ligeti, George Crumb, Joseph Schwantner, and Tōru Takemitsu all fell under this broad banner. New Romanticism was less of a cohesive aesthetic than a means of describing a wide swath of disparate music that belonged to what Druckman called a "mysterious and fragrant garden of dreams."<sup>44</sup>

Druckman also situated New Romanticism within his own trajectory. He had dabbled in writing serial music earlier in his career—he once

quipped that “not being a serialist on the East Coast of the United States in the sixties was like not being a Catholic in Rome in the thirteenth century. It was the respectable thing to do, at least once”—and worked at the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center in the 1960s.<sup>45</sup> His electronic compositions led him to new realizations about timbre and, in the 1970s, he began writing a series of large-scale orchestral works, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Windows*, that explored a gestural, freely intuitive style that mixed tonality and atonality, and which he described as “a reaction of 15 to 20 years of strictly controlled post-Webernian structuring, the kind of thing that has held music in a prison.”<sup>46</sup> In 1974, Druckman had framed this new path as a turn away from what he saw as the insularity of the academy:

I think we’re loosening up a bit, but it had come to the point where students were writing pieces that would sound terrible in the concert hall and yet were very beautifully analyzable in these professional journals. The battle was being fought in these journals instead of in the concert hall, and this I think is very unhealthy.<sup>47</sup>

Importantly, despite resonating with the anti-academic and anti-serial posturing of composers like David Del Tredici and George Rochberg, New Romanticism was not necessarily neo-Romanticism. Although the festival included the music of Del Tredici and Rochberg—two composers widely known at the time for having publicly renounced modernism in the 1970s in favor of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century tonality and expressive gestures, and thus strongly associated with the term neo-Romanticism—Druckman’s essay did not mention them. Instead, he identified the emergence of what he called “the new aesthetic” in 1960s works by Penderecki, Lutosławski, and Ligeti; he saw Luciano Berio’s collage-like, postmodern 1968 *Sinfonia* as a central example of New Romanticism.<sup>48</sup> With the *Sinfonia* as a centerpiece, the festival’s six orchestral concerts ultimately featured twenty-five composers and a broad range of voices, including music by Donald Martino, Joseph Schwantner, Morton Subotnick, Tōru Takemitsu, and Frederic Rzewski.

But Druckman also did not discourage slippage between New Romanticism and neo-Romanticism, an idiom that was already popular among audiences—Del Tredici’s cantata *Final Alice* made a sensation at its 1976 Chicago Symphony premiere, where audiences welcomed the sixty-five minute piece with a lengthy, standing ovation, and a live recording topped *Billboard’s* classical charts—and a frequent point of contention among music critics. Describing the theme of the Horizons festival in its first press announcement, Mehta had actually made such a slip: “This





*Figure 3.* Zubin Mehta and Jacob Druckman in Avery Fisher Hall, circa 1980s. Photographer unknown, New York Philharmonic Digital Archives, ID 800-014-10-013. Used by permission.

and widest possible audience.”<sup>55</sup> As per a different November 1982 committee meeting, the festival’s goals included “Develop new audience” and “Serve as a catalyst for contemporary music reaching the people.”<sup>56</sup>

A campaign budget approved in February 1983 proposed a total of \$82,102 to be spent on 200,000 pieces of direct mail; a run of advertisements in the *New York Times*, *Village Voice*, and other periodicals; packages of radio ads for broadcast on four stations; and further promotions.<sup>57</sup> Promotional schemes were regularly discussed in committee meetings, although some were deemed too outlandish: one committee member

suggested an advertising gimmick in which audience members could collect a \$1 rebate from the orchestra for attending a performance, tied to the slogan “You couldn’t pay me to attend contemporary music”—“Oh, yes, we will!”<sup>58</sup> (The minutes coolly noted, in response, that “this might not be the best approach artistically.”) Widely distributed flyers proclaimed the festival as “Three weeks that could just change your mind about the meaning of new music.”<sup>59</sup> Consistent through the planning phases was the concern that ticket prices be kept low in order to attract a broad public. Single tickets were ultimately priced at \$8; a pass for all six concerts cost only \$30; students and seniors received a 50 percent discount; and four symposia as well as six pre-concert “What’s the Score? Meet the Composer” panels were free.<sup>60</sup> The orchestra hoped to reach new music aficionados, subscribers who might typically balk at contemporary works, and young audiences not ordinarily found at the Philharmonic.

Given such intensive promotion, critics were not entirely incorrect when they chided New Romanticism as a scheme to sell tickets. In a preview of the festival, John Rockwell wrote in the *Times*: “What with the conservatism of the vast majority of the orchestral audiences, subtitled a Philharmonic new music festival ‘The New Romanticism?’ might seem a calculated marketing ploy, rather than a sincere ideological conviction.”<sup>61</sup> Rockwell’s coverage was itself courted by the press-seeking Philharmonic: “We are proposing a number of publicity ideas,” a March 1983 document titled “Publicity Campaign, Horizons 83” noted, and listed a wide variety of print and broadcast outlets to which they planned to pitch stories on the festival.<sup>62</sup> A subsequent document compiled various pitches and confirmed stories, including Rockwell’s article, a *Times* profile of David Del Tredici, and an array of feature articles proposed by the orchestra to journalists at outlets including the *New York Daily News*, *New York Post*, *Newsday*, *Associated Press*, *United Press*, *Ovation*, *Symphony News*, *Village Voice*, *Stagebill*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*; another memo recapped the success thus far of pitches made to an array of radio and television stations.<sup>63</sup>

All of the advance press helped guarantee that the festival’s opening night on Thursday, June 2—a program of works by Marc Antonio Consoli, Peter Maxwell Davies, Tōru Takemitsu, and Del Tredici—was a splash. A huge audience turned out for the first concert, overwhelming Avery Fisher’s box office. “We held the first notes for about twenty minutes and we still didn’t get all the people in,” Druckman later recalled.<sup>64</sup> According to critic Joan La Barbara, on opening night Druckman announced from the stage, “From the looks of things at the box office, we’ve just launched the biggest rocket this country’s ever seen in new music.”<sup>65</sup> Ultimately, an average of 1,800 tickets were sold for

each of the six concerts in the 1983 festival, filling Avery Fisher Hall to an average of over 70 percent capacity.<sup>66</sup> Journalists consistently observed that such an audience for new music was extraordinary; *Los Angeles Daily News* critic Richard S. Ginell, for example, noted that “the turnouts at the three concerts I attended were remarkable.”<sup>67</sup>

Many of the hundred-plus music critics already in town wrote about Horizons: Duffy had sent personal invitations to more than seventy writers to attend the MTC resident composer meeting on the second day of the festival. Critics inevitably argued about the New Romanticism theme, speculating on its historical significance, discussing whether the works chosen by Druckman fit neatly within the curatorial framework, and often dismissing the larger concept entirely. As Samuel Lipman wrote in *The New Criterion*, “What is clear is that by using the word ‘Romanticism’ Druckman provided a legion of grateful music critics with a hook on which to hang yards of sophisticated discussion.”<sup>68</sup> Visiting from Los Angeles, critic Alan Rich wrote in *Newsweek* that “Druckman dreamed up a premise both alluring and irritating: ‘Horizons ’83: Since 1968, a New Romanticism?’ That question mark fueled some lively discussions: the C-major forces versus the silicon-chip crowd.” Though skeptical of the broader framework, Rich described the festival as “a step forward in keeping audiences awake.”<sup>69</sup> Reviewing the second-to-last program of Horizons, *Times* critic Bernard Holland wrote, “The trouble with ‘theme’ concerts, indeed with ‘theme’ series, is that we tend to become sidetracked by their basic premises.” Having just heard music by Rochberg, Lukas Foss, Schwantner, and Rzewski in a single evening, he observed that “we must strain with all our might to make this kind of unifying concept seem worthwhile.”<sup>70</sup> In the wake of the festival, *Times* chief critic Donal Henahan took New Romanticism to task as a “specious theme,” and found that the final concert of music by Wuorinen, Gunther Schuller, Tison Street, and Druckman “on the whole did not uphold its shaky premises.” He heard only Street’s Adagio for Oboe and String Orchestra, written in what he described as “19th-century tonal idiom,” as an example of New Romanticism. Even major music critics thus ignored Druckman’s notion of New Romanticism as broadly characterized by “sensuality, mystery, nostalgia, ecstasy, transcendency,” instead interpreting the phrase as referring to works directly referencing the musical style of the Romantic era.<sup>71</sup>

Despite such misgivings, many prominent writers saw New Romanticism as a sea change. Unlike Henahan, who frequently dismissed modern composition, Rockwell, as a longtime champion of contemporary music, was a particularly notable chronicler of the festival. In a Critic’s Notebook column whose headline wondered “Is ‘New Romanticism’ Music of the Future?” Rockwell described Horizons as a “healthy success,”



the reviews of the 1983 festival, this perspective was made emphatically clear in an essay by Milton Babbitt written for the subsequent 1984 festival's program booklet, in which the composer lambasted Druckman's conception of New Romanticism and its critical reception as a form of anti-intellectual populism. "It is written by the stars of journalism and in the words of the prophets of cultural history that music is entering a new era or reentering an old one (by the back door or trap door?)," Babbitt wrote, "and this birth or rebirth has been celebrated by appropriately Dionysian dancing on the tombs of those musics liquidated and interred for the mortal sins and aesthetic transgressions of intellection, academicism, and—even—mathematization."<sup>76</sup> (Composers who had never abandoned tonality to begin with were also perturbed. "Everybody makes a fuss over somebody who quits smoking," Ned Rorem told the *Times*, "but never over the person who is smart enough never to have started."<sup>77</sup>)

The heated reception accorded to two particular works at Horizons '83 served as representative of such seismic shifts, and an indication of a broader turn away from serialism and the academy that many saw the festival as instantiating. On separate nights of the festival, a combination of fervent applause and a chorus of boos greeted both Del Tredici's glitteringly Straussian cantata *All in the Golden Afternoon* and Adams's emphatically tonal and repetitive *Grand Pianola Music*. In a festival crowded with a multitude of compositional voices, the mini-scandals afforded to those representatives of provocative musical styles—neo-Romanticism in the case of Del Tredici and minimalism in the case of Adams—served to bring special attention to their work. Ginell observed that "these reactions seem refreshingly healthy—and undoubtedly Del Tredici and Adams were well aware of the publicity value of a succès de scandale."<sup>78</sup> For those hoping that the festival would shake up the orchestral world, the boos confirmed the necessity of Horizons. "Better a worked-up audience, fiercely booing and cheering the resolute tunefulness of a Del Tredici or an Adams than a snoozing crowd of regular subscribers at yet another orchestral run-through of the three B's," Rich wrote in *Newsweek*.<sup>79</sup> Even Lipman, who called the Del Tredici work the "apotheosis of camp" and the Adams the "biggest unstaged Busby Berkeley musical in history," noted that "mingled cheers and boos of the audience added up to a mini-sensation."<sup>80</sup>

The "musical hothouse" of Horizons '83 also made a strong impact on an emerging generation of composers, who noticed the ticket lines that snaked out into Lincoln Center's plaza; the boos and applause that followed music by Adams and Del Tredici; and the debates in the press and the boxes of Avery Fisher Hall around its New Romanticism theme. One such figure was Druckman's student Aaron Jay Kernis, whose music was given significant exposure during the '83 festival when his work *dream*





*Figure 5.* Zubin Mehta and Aaron Jay Kernis at open rehearsal of Kernis's *dream of the morning sky*. Photograph by Bial Bert, New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives, ID 800-116-09-001. Used by permission.

the New York Philharmonic's 'Horizon' series of 20th century music are needed."<sup>89</sup> The festival resonated powerfully outside of New York, representing a moment in which the aims of MTC intertwined with the curatorial ambitions of a composer-in-residence and the priorities of a symphony orchestra. New music had been given a major opportunity to compete in the marketplace, and—in part because of New Romanticism—it prospered.



two composers included a broad representation of figures from different areas of the compositional world, including academic composers Milton Babbitt and Roger Reynolds, minimalists Philip Glass and La Monte Young, and experimentalists Pauline Oliveros and Carl Stone.<sup>95</sup> Even if panel meetings for awarding grants could become contentious—Fran Richard and Tania León both remembered an instance in which a fistfight almost broke out over whether to award a grant to Glass—they were seen as more hospitable to a range of musical idioms than those of other organizations at the time.<sup>96</sup> This perception was shared among champions of both downtown and uptown. In a letter to Duffy in 1993, *Village Voice* critic Kyle Gann described MTC as “the only aesthetically unbiased composer-funding organization in America, the only one that doesn’t make its decisions among stylistic or political criteria.”<sup>97</sup> In 2017, Charles Wuorinen praised Duffy for his work in bringing together a diverse array of composers: “When he espoused everybody, he really did it. There was everybody from John Cage to Milton Babbitt to Elliott [Carter] and to me and to other people like that. It was a complete spectrum, and he was completely impartial.”<sup>98</sup>

As Libby Larsen recalled in 2017, “John set a banquet table, and that banquet table was music, and the guests were all composers.”<sup>99</sup> That inclusivity was explicitly extended to Larsen in an institutional world from which women were frequently excluded. Jann Pasler has documented how women composers were consistently “at a disadvantage” in the activities of the National Endowment for the Arts music program from the late 1960s to mid-1980s, in terms of both serving on panels and being awarded grants.<sup>100</sup> But support for underrepresented composers was a strong component of MTC’s mission; in its 1984 application, MTC stated that the organization “gives priority to applicants who program the works of women and minority composers.”<sup>101</sup> Of the forty-two composers on MTC’s 1984 advisory board, nine were black, and six were women.<sup>102</sup> Although that number might seem low, it was substantive in comparison to other boards and panels that adjudicated support for contemporary music. Michael Uy, for example, has noted the “underrepresentation of women and racial minorities” among consultants and panelists for music at the Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, and National Endowment for the Arts in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>103</sup> And the presence of black and women composers made MTC feel distinctive as an organization. As León remembered positively, “Muhai [Richard Abrams] was sitting on that board, Leroy Jenkins was sitting on that board, I was sitting on that board.”<sup>104</sup> African American composer T. J. Anderson wrote to Duffy in 1986 that “a cursory review of composers who are associated with Meet the



“is open to attack on equal-rights grounds (only one woman composer, no blacks).”<sup>113</sup> It was subsequently highlighted by the *Amsterdam News*, however, and a *Washington Post* article mentioned that “the total omission of black composers, combined with what he sees as a consistent pattern of discrimination by the New York Philharmonic, led the music critic of the *Amsterdam News*, Raoul Abdul, to boycott the festival entirely.”<sup>114</sup> Abdul focused specifically on the New York State Council on the Arts funding of Horizons, arguing that the public organization’s non-discriminatory policy was at odds with the festival’s discriminatory programming, and that the Philharmonic’s state subsidy should thus be returned. In a letter to NYSCA chair Kitty Carlisle Hart, he described the Horizons programming as an “insult to the Black community” and added that “I know you do not wish to in any way support racism with the Council’s funds.”<sup>115</sup>

James Jordan, the director of NYSCA’s music program and an advocate for women and minority composers, wrote to Webster at the Philharmonic on 13 June praising the festival but noting Abdul’s objections and making clear that his efforts had led to a broader campaign:

The Council would, however, be remiss in its duties both to the people of the state and indeed to the art form as it presently exists if it were to ignore certain omissions in the roster of composers chosen. As was pointed out by the large number of distinguished minority composers who telephoned my office these last two weeks, no American minority composers, and only one woman, were represented. Many of us feel that the Horizons Series is broader and brighter than that.<sup>116</sup>

Hart then responded to Abdul that NYSCA shared his concerns—quoting from the program’s affirmative action guidelines—but saying that the council granted its funds based on the track record of the applicant, rather than prescreening its programming.<sup>117</sup> Likely before he received the response from Hart, Abdul had collected press clippings about the festival’s problematic programming and mailed them to Webster. In an accompanying letter, Abdul threatened legal action against the festival, writing that “in accepting funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, the Philharmonic (and all recipients) understand that money is given only if the organization agrees that it doesn’t discriminate.”<sup>118</sup>

Meet the Composer and Duffy were certainly apprised of Abdul’s campaign; Abdul, after all, was focusing on the same concerns that MTC itself had already raised. According to Tania León, at some point either during the Horizons ’83 planning or after Abdul’s protest, “Duffy called all the composers of color and told them, ‘Bring your scores.’ And he

collected scores of many. . . . And he walked into the New York Philharmonic and put the scores on top of the desk.”<sup>119</sup>

In a September 1983 column, Abdul recapped his arguments from the summer, pointed out Druckman and the administration’s silence in addressing the issue, and wrote: “It is also clear from the brochure for the coming [Philharmonic] season, that no Black composers are scheduled.”<sup>120</sup> He again focused on the \$70,000 of funding provided to the festival by NYSCA: “This is money which has come in part from the pockets of Black taxpayers. Black money used to promote racism, a strange set of affairs indeed.”<sup>121</sup> And, of particular significance given the idea of Horizons as the flagship for the Orchestra Residencies Program, Abdul staked the importance of more diverse programming on the notion of the Philharmonic as influential: “Because it is a major influence on smaller orchestras around the country, the Philharmonic has a special responsibility to bring Blacks into the mainstream.”

In response to the article, Mehta wrote directly to Abdul and argued that his approach to programming was colorblind: “Although it is my intention always to program for my audience what I feel is representative in today’s musical creativity, race and color have no part in it for me.”<sup>122</sup> He had conducted works by black composers on the Philharmonic’s subscription concerts in the past “because of my conviction that these works could stand side-by-side with any other works by today’s American composers.” The conductor requested that scores be sent to the Philharmonic offices, which he would consider for future programming. But it is unlikely that the request would have made much of a difference. After all, because of the MTC residency and the prestige of Horizons, such materials would be competing with the dozens of scores already arriving at the Philharmonic’s offices each week, which were typically examined not by Mehta but by Druckman. And, according to León, Duffy had already provided the Philharmonic with a substantial number of scores by minority composers.

Whether because of the concerns of Abdul, Duffy, Mehta, or NYSCA, the 1984 Horizons festival and its theme of “The New Romanticism: A Broader View” included works by three black composers—George Lewis, Anthony Davis, and George Walker—and five women—Betsy Jolas, Diamanda Galás, Thea Musgrave, Laurie Spiegel, and Joan La Barbara. Abdul wrote approvingly of the changes in advance of the festival.<sup>123</sup> But tensions still lingered around the programming. At the opening symposium for the festival in June 1984, an audience member apparently asked an all-white, all-male panel—which included composers Hans Werner Henze, Milton Babbitt, Roger Reynolds, Druckman, and critic Gregory Sandow—“Why aren’t there any women represented here?”<sup>124</sup>

“The response was an incredibly pregnant silence,” Johnny Reinhard wrote in *EAR Magazine*. The discussion continued to unfold awkwardly, as someone else asked, “What about Ornette Coleman?” As Reinhard described:

Mr. Sandow fielded the question by pointing out how interesting it is that Jazz musicians prefer to be kept separate from what was being represented on the Horizons series when *New York Times* music critic John Rockwell cried out, “That’s not true, Gregory!” It appears that Mr. Coleman had told him otherwise. “Maybe it’s because he’s black,” suggested Brooke Wentz timidly.<sup>125</sup>

For most observers, such moments of conflict ultimately resided at the sidelines of the Horizons festivals. Despite his comment at the panel, Rockwell’s description of the event in the *Times* made no mention of race or gender; the main focus among critics was instead on the potential for a fight to erupt around Babbitt, in part because Sandow had penned an advance essay titled “An Open Letter to Milton Babbitt” in the *Village Voice* in which he castigated the composer’s academic mindset and stated: “You’ve become your own worst enemy.”<sup>126</sup> (No such conflict manifested at the panel: Rockwell noted that “polemics were muted by politeness,” and *New York* magazine critic Peter G. Davis, hoping for a tiff between Babbitt and Sandow, wrote instead that “disappointed onlookers watched these gentlemanly adversaries all but fall into each other’s arms.”<sup>127</sup>)

The mainstream narrative of the first two Horizons festivals focused on New Romanticism, its ties to neo-Romanticism, its success with audiences and the press, and what it suggested about the decline of the academic avant-garde. But just because Abdul’s protest was not widely covered should not place it at the periphery of the history of Horizons and the Orchestra Residencies Program. The absence of diversity at the 1983 festival reveals the practical limitations of the marketplace that Duffy hoped to create. MTC’s reliance on other institutions to realize the marketplace it imagined meant that it had to contend with the historical conservatism and narrow perspectives of those organizations, even if it hoped to create a landscape more supportive of underrepresented composers. If the question of whether New Romanticism was an abstract Dionysian impulse, a synonym for neo-Romanticism, or a marketing gimmick was left deliberately unresolved, it is clear that this new musical movement—one that received enormous amounts of press, prestige, and audience approval—was a predominantly white and male vanguard.

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in order to maintain profits as the price of oil declined. Between 1982 and 1987, Exxon had contributed more than 40 percent of the Orchestra Residencies Program's \$2,082,000 total expenses. MTC scrambled but successfully made up the lost funding with support from Pew Charitable Trusts, Dana Trust, Hewlett Foundation, and other organizations.<sup>133</sup> And when the ten-year-old Orchestra Residencies Program concluded in 1992, it left a mixed legacy. Its effects on composers and the programming of contemporary music were clear. When the initiative began in 1982, participating orchestras had programmed twenty-four contemporary works in subscription concerts; in 1992, that number had grown to more than eighty.<sup>134</sup> New careers in the orchestral world, including those of John Adams, Aaron Jay Kernis, Libby Larsen, Joan Tower, and others, had been firmly established. Among U.S. orchestras writ large—not only those participating in residencies—performances of twentieth-century works increased by 63 percent from the 1982–83 season to the 1990–91 season.<sup>135</sup>

At the 1991 conference summarizing the program, Libby Larsen asked the fundamental question about the Orchestra Residencies Program: “Do we program risky music as a project, or do we change the orchestra’s structure to include risk in our programming?”<sup>136</sup> Duffy subsequently wrote to Druckman echoing Larsen’s words, and added: “If project, then it will end when the program ends. If structure, it’s part of the rock foundation and will last as long as orchestras themselves.” In that October 1991 letter, the MTC founder was describing his goal of creating \$1 million endowed chairs to place composers as permanent members of American orchestras. But Duffy’s vision was never realized, and the next major MTC initiative would instead be a fund, sponsored by the Lila Wallace–Reader’s Digest Fund and the NEA, focused on commissioning new works for smaller orchestras as well as opera, dance, and theater companies. Looking back on the program in 1996—when only six of the twenty-one orchestras that had participated still maintained composer positions—*New York Times* critic K. Robert Schwarz wrote that “as orchestras retrench, the composer-in-residence will become an increasingly endangered species.”<sup>137</sup>

Meet the Composer transformed the marketplace, but the Orchestra Residences Program ultimately represented a project, not a structure. Its impact was wide-ranging but is largely overlooked today, in part because of nationwide declines in public and private support since the gutting of the National Endowment for the Arts in the mid-1990s. In 1990, the *Times* reported that Meet the Composer gave, on average, \$2.5 million to composers per year; in contemporary buying power, that is around five times the amount of grant support that New Music USA, MTC’s successor, provided annually in 2017.<sup>138</sup> Composer residencies at many

orchestras around the United States, however, persist, in part because of the structure enacted by Meet the Composer. And even if such efforts to promote new music do not reach the same broad audience as Horizons '83, their continued attention to the marketplace is certain.

### Notes

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1. Jacob Druckman, interview with Erwin Nigg, 14 June 1994, quoted in Erwin K. Nigg, "An Analysis of Jacob Druckman's Works for Wind Ensemble: *Engram* (1982), *Paeam* (1986), *In Memoriam Vincent Persichetti* (1987), *With Bells On* (1993)" (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 1995), 221.
2. For example, describing major opera houses investing in new commissions by John Harbison and Philip Glass, Richard Taruskin writes: "In part this seeming rebirth was a result of the changes wrought by 'postmodernism' in the relative prestige of composing styles. . . . Both [Harbison and Glass] had abandoned their earlier avant-garde positions and were now meeting the vast moderate middle ground labeled 'neo-Romanticism.'" Taruskin, *Music in the Late Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 516. See similar discussions in John Rockwell, *All American Music: Composition in the Late Twentieth Century* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1997),

71–83; and Robert Fink, “(Post-)Minimalisms 1970–2000: The Search for a New Mainstream,” in *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 539–56. For general discussions of these stylistic developments and postmodernism, see Kenneth Gloag, *Postmodernism in Music* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Jonathan D. Kramer, *Postmodern Music, Postmodern Listening* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); and Judy Lochhead and Joseph Auner, eds., *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002).

The Horizons festivals have mostly remained a footnote in such discussions, deployed as evidence of broader institutional support of neo-Romanticism. As Jann Pasler summarizes in her *Grove Dictionary* entry “Neo-Romantic,” “Since the mid-1970s, neo-Romantic has become synonymous with neo-conservative postmodernism, especially in Germany, Austria and the USA. The Horizons ’83 and ’84 concerts sponsored by the New York PO drew public attention to the aesthetic.” Similarly, Taruskin briefly cites the festival in a discussion of controversies around the music of George Rochberg in *Music in the Late Twentieth Century*, 435. Kyle Gann notes Horizons ’83 in his study of American music; a chapter on neo-Romanticism is titled “The New Romanticism” and also mentions the Meet the Composer residency program. Kyle Gann, *American Music in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Schirmer Books), 220–21. Mary Rameaka Campbell, however, devotes significant portions of her analysis of neo-Romanticism to the programming and reception of the Horizons festivals; see Mary Rameaka Campbell, “Tonal Reform or Radical Tonality? A Study of Neo-Romanticism in American Music, with an Emphasis on the Music and Thought of George Rochberg” (PhD diss., University of Connecticut, 1994).

John Rockwell does identify the first Horizons festival as a key moment, although for documenting an aesthetic change. In the 1997 preface to a new edition of his 1983 *All American Music* he writes: “This book came along at just the moment that people began to perceive a shift from modernism to postmodernism, from aloof austerity to sometimes desperately pandering accessibility. Shortly after *All American Music* was published and written about, the late Jacob Druckman presented his first New Romanticism Horizons festival for the New York Philharmonic. For better or worse, what has happened since 1983 is that the pendulum of taste, in music and nearly all the arts, has swung so far in the opposite direction that lovers of openness and balance have cause to be worried from the opposite perspective: to rescue seriousness and austerity and feisty close-mindedness from the great levelers of the new establishment” (xi–xii).

3. John Duffy, “Put a Composer in Your Life,” *The Arts Chronicle*, September 1980.
4. Benjamin Patterson to Jacob Druckman, 27 February 1970, Jacob Druckman Papers, Music Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Folder 1008.
5. John Duffy, quoted in Carol Tuynman, “John Duffy: Meet the Composer,” *EAR Magazine* 10, no. 5 (June–July 1986): 22.



21. Duffy to Leonard Fleischer, Howard Klein, and Ezra Laderman, 9 August 1981, Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 84.
22. *Ibid.*
23. See Donna M. Binkiewicz, *Federalizing the Muse* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); and Chin-Tao Wu, *Privatizing Culture* (London: Verso, 2003).
24. Duffy, quoted in "Meet the Composer: A Dialogue," *American Music Center Newsletter*, 27, no. 4 (1985): 12; "John Duffy Honors the Residencies' Funders," *Meet the Composer Orchestra Residencies Newsletter* (Fall 1991), 1, Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 84.
25. "Financial Summary 1982–1987 Orchestra Residencies Program," Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 55.
26. Theodore Wiprud and Joyce Lawler, eds., *Composer In Residence: Meet the Composer's Orchestra Residencies Program, 1982–1992* (New York: Meet the Composer, 1995), vi.
27. Duffy to Fleischer, Klein, and Laderman, 9 August 1981, Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 84.
28. Duffy, quoted in Carol Tuynman, "John Duffy: Meet the Composer," 23.
29. *Ibid.*
30. The 1984 Pulitzer Prize was awarded to Bernard Rands for his *Canti del Sole*, premiered by the New York Philharmonic during the 1983 Horizons festival, and the 1991 Pulitzer was given to Shulamit Ran for her 1991 *Symphony*, commissioned as part of Ran's Philadelphia Orchestra residency; the 1990 Grawemeyer Award went to Joan Tower for her *Silver Ladders*, a St. Louis Symphony residency commission; and the 1991 Grawemeyer went to John Corigliano for his *Symphony No. 1*, a Chicago Symphony residency commission. The 1992 newsletter also noted a "long run in high positions" of the *Billboard* classical charts for Adams's *Harmonielehre*, as well as "Over One Year in Top 25" and "Highest Position: No. 3" for the Chicago Symphony recording of Corigliano's *Symphony No. 1*. "Meet the Composer: Orchestra Residencies Program, 1982–92," Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 84.
31. Edward Rothstein, "Classical View; Supply-Side Composers Join the Band," *New York Times*, 30 October 1994.
32. Joan Tower, "Statement of Reasons for the Importance of the Residency Program," n.d. (likely 1986), Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 84.
33. George Perle, quoted in Wiprud and Lawler, *Composer in Residence*, 5.
34. John Adams to Adrian Gnam, 9 June 1984, Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 84.
35. *Ibid.*



48. Minutes for a 1982 planning meeting for the festival, for example, state that “Mr. Druckman believes that the Berio is one of the major works in the ‘new romantic’ style.” New York Philharmonic, “Minutes of the Music Policy Committee Meeting,” 3 November 1982, Jacob Druckman Papers, Music Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Folder 685.

In an essay for the Horizons '84 program booklet, Druckman clarified that “the New Romanticism of the 20th century does not necessarily sound like 19th-century romanticism. It can, and sometimes does, as in the music of Del Tredici and Rochberg. However, the concept is larger than any one style. It is those qualities of nostalgia, lushness, sensuality, mystery, grandiose gesture and intensely personal expression which are the measure of the new aesthetic.” Druckman, “The New Romanticism—A Broader View,” in *Horizons '84: The New Romanticism—A Broader View*, commemorative magazine, 1984, 3.

The “Since 1968” subheading for the 1983 festival theme also seems chosen more for Berio’s *Sinfonia* than for the overt political references it may have summoned; although Druckman wrote that “the strong but unfocused revolutionary spirit which gripped Europe in the post-Napoleonic years certainly seems to have been reflected in the student uprisings in the late 1960s,” works selected for the 1983 festival did not engage explicitly with political themes.

49. New York Philharmonic, “News for Release,” 27 January 1983, New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-19.

50. Druckman, interview with Nigg, quoted in Nigg, “An Analysis,” 221.

51. Kathy Erlandson, “Minutes Contemporary Festival Meeting, November 17, 1982,” 1 December 1982, New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-19.

52. Erlandson, “Meeting—January 20,” 20 January 1983, New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-19.

53. Albert K. Webster to Gail Countz, 28 March 1983, New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-16.

54. “Draft: Contemporary Music Festival,” n.d., New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-17.

55. *Ibid.*

56. Erlandson, “Minutes Contemporary Festival Meeting, November 17, 1982.”

57. “Horizons '83 Spring Concerts Promotional Campaign Budget Revised,” New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-26.

58. Erlandson, “Meeting—January 20.”

59. Promotional flyer, New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-17.

60. Prices for typical single tickets in subscription concerts in 1983–84, not including Horizons, ranged from \$6 for the third tier of the hall to \$22–\$25 for first tier. “Press Releases, Jan 19, 1983–Dec 27, 1983,” New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives, ID 765-28-02, 23.

61. John Rockwell, "The Philharmonic Looks at Contemporary Music," *New York Times*, 29 May 1983.
62. "Publicity campaign, Horizons 83," 29 March 1983, New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-26.
63. "Horizons Print Pitches or Confirmed Stories," n.d., New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-24.
64. Nigg, "An Analysis," 221.
65. Joan La Barbara, "There's a Hungry Crowd Out There," *Musical America* (October 1983): 23.
66. John Rockwell, "All-Ligeti Bill to Open Horizons '86 Festival," *New York Times*, 21 May 1984. A Philharmonic document outlining plans for the 1984 festival described the 1983 Horizons as a "dramatic success, receiving critical acclaim and popular support. Avery Fisher Hall was filled to an average capacity of over 70%, and the publicity was exceptional." "New York Philharmonic: Horizons '84: 'A New Romanticism?—A Broader Review,'" n.d., New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-12.
67. Richard S. Ginell, "On the Horizons, a Coastal Tug-of-War," *Los Angeles Daily News*, 19 June 1983.
68. Lipman, "The Philharmonic's New Horizons."
69. Alan Rich, "Invaders from the New West," *Newsweek*, 20 June 1983, 81.
70. Bernard Holland, "Philharmonic: Festival of Moderns," *New York Times*, 12 June 1983.
71. Donal Henahan, "Music: Schuller Leads 'Horizons '83,'" *New York Times*, 16 June 1983.
72. John Rockwell, "Critic's Notebook; Is 'New Romanticism' Music of the Future?" *New York Times*, 16 June 1983.
73. Edward Rothstein, "The Musical Avant-Garde: An Idea Whose Time May Have Gone," *New York Times*, 26 June 1983.
74. *Ibid.*
75. Joseph N. Straus, "The Myth of Serial 'Tyranny' in the 1950s and 1960s," *The Musical Quarterly* 83, no. 3 (Fall 1999): 301–43.
76. Milton Babbitt, "The More Than The Sounds of Music," *Horizons '84*, 10. Reprinted in Stephen Peles, ed., *The Collected Essays of Milton Babbitt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 383–87.
77. Tim Page, "The New Romance with Tonality," *New York Times*, 29 May 1983.
78. Ginell, "On the Horizons."  
Under the pseudonym "Charles Ruggles," one of those who booed described his reasons for doing so in a letter to the *Village Voice*, calling Del Tredici's music

“hackneyed” and writing that the entire festival “bore a weird resemblance to a proceeding one might expect to find during a totalitarian cultural purge, as composer after composer stood before the audience, admitting shamefacedly to past errors in their choice of aesthetic, but assuring the stern but understanding crowd that they had seen the light.” Charles Ruggles, “Looking Glass Catcalls,” *Village Voice*, 5 July 1983. The composer Evan Ziporyn confirmed to me that he was the author of that letter. Evan Ziporyn, email to author, 9 October 2018.

79. Rich, “Invaders From the New West.”

80. Lipman, “The Philharmonic’s New Horizons.”

81. Leta E. Miller, *Aaron Jay Kernis* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 27–42.

82. Miller, *Aaron Jay Kernis*, 27.

83. David Lang, “Jacob Druckman’s Horizons,” 1 January 2000, <https://davidlang-music.com/about/writings/jacob-druckmans-horizons>.

84. See Rockwell, “All-Ligeti Bill to Open Horizons ’86 Festival”; and Joan La Barbara, “The Orchestra Residency Program,” *Musical America* 33, no. 11 (November 1983): 14.

85. “Horizons Comments,” n.d., New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-12.

86. *Ibid.*

87. Howard Klein to Jacob Druckman, 18 July 1983, Jacob Druckman Papers, Music Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Folder 687.

88. “Horizons Comments,” n.d., New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-12.

89. See National Endowment for the Arts, “National Endowment for the Arts Five-Year Planning Document, 1986–1990” (1984), 271.

90. Raoul Abdul, “N.Y. Philharmonic Hit Again On Charges of Racial Bias,” *New York Voice*, 11 June 1983.

91. *Ibid.*

92. *Ibid.*

93. See, for example, Adrienne Fried Block, *Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Rae Linda Brown, “Lifting the Veil: The Symphonies of Florence B. Price,” in Florence Price, *Symphonies No. 1 and 3*, ed. Rae Linda Brown and Wayne Shirley (Middleton, WI: AR Editions, 2008), xv–lii; Marcia J. Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black Americans* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1971); and Douglas Shadle, *Orchestrating the Nation: The Nineteenth-Century American Symphony Enterprise* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

94. John Duffy, quoted in “Meet the Composer: A Dialogue,” *American Music Center Newsletter* 27, no. 4 (1985): 12. Frances Richard similarly said in a 1980

interview: “One of the reasons that we think we can build a network through the MTC program is because we are not stressing the difference between composers and their various aesthetic opinions, which they have their right to, but rather to take the common goals of composers.” Richard, quoted in Peter Wetzler, “Meet the Composer Interview,” *EAR Magazine East* 6, no. 1 (November–December 1980): 3.

95. Iossa, John, and Richard, *Commissioning Music*, 5
96. Richard, interview with author, 27 June 2017; León, interview with author, 2 June 2017.
97. Kyle Gann to John Duffy, 19 October 1993, Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 51.
98. Wuorinen, interview with author, 11 June 2017.
99. Larsen, interview with author, 8 June 2017.
100. Jann Pasler, *Writing Through Music: Essays on Music, Culture, and Politics* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 355.
101. Meet the Composer Application Guidelines, June 1984, Composers' Forum Inc. Records, Music Division, New York Public Library, Box 9, Folder 1.
102. According to the 1984 *Commissioning Music* handbook, the 1984 advisory board comprised:
 

Muhai Richard Abrams, John Adams, T. J. Anderson, Larry Austin, Milton Babbitt, Jack Beeson, Earle Brown, Joseph Celli, Ornette Coleman, Michael Colgrass, Charles Dodge, Douglas Ewart, Morton Feldman, Lukas Foss, Philip Glass, Leroy Jenkins, Karl Korte, Libby Larsen, Tania León, Edwin London, Otto Luening, Marian McPartland, Kermit Moore, Kirk Nurock, Pauline Oliveros, Bernard Rands, Gregory Reeve, Roger Reynolds, Robert Xavier Rodriguez, Ned Rorem, Eric Salzman, Gunther Schuller, Elie Siegmeister, Robert Starer, Carl Stone, Cecil Taylor, Joan Tower, Nancy van de Vate, Hugo Weisgall, Olly Wilson, Charles Wuorinen, and La Monte Young.

Abrams, Anderson, Coleman, Ewart, Jenkins, León, Moore, Taylor, and Wilson were black; Larsen, León, McPartland, Oliveros, Tower, and van de Vate were women.

In 1990, an advisory board of forty-seven composers included ten black composers and eight women. Jane S. Moss, “Meet the Composer/Reader's Digest Commissioning Program in Partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts Proposal,” Appendix D, Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 24.
103. Uy, “The Big Bang of Music Patronage in the United States,” 118.
104. León, interview with author, 2 June 2017.
105. T. J. Anderson to “To Whom It May Concern,” 18 July 1986, Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 84.
106. As Larsen described in our interview, 8 June 2017, this was a decision proposed to Duffy by Larsen and Paulus: they had already cofounded the Minnesota Composers

Forum and hoped that sharing the residency would help them better effect change in the local composition community.

107. These were Alvin Singleton, Shulamit Ran, Robert Xavier Rodriguez, Deborah Drattell, Roberto Sierra, Libby Larsen, Joan Tower, and Bright Sheng.

108. Duffy to Adams, Druckman, Harbison, Robert Xavier Rodriguez, and Joseph Schwantner, 14 May 1982, Jacob Druckman Papers, Music Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Folder 1009.

Duffy seemed particularly attuned to counteracting the institutional and discursive forces that, as George Lewis has shown, frequently excluded black composers from the genre of new music and instead placed them in the category of jazz, thus limiting their access to forms of non-commercial support. See George E. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). Meet the Composer's Reader's Digest Commissioning Program, for example, included specific support for commissions to "jazz composers" to write symphonic, opera, and dance works. As Duffy said in 1989, "These are extremely gifted composers who have made reputations in jazz but have had to go to Europe to make a living. . . . Most of them are black. They want to express themselves in larger forms." Duffy, quoted in Robert Commanday, "Cultivating an Audience for American Music," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5 February 1989.

Describing the program in 1990, Duffy said that "There have also been times we've suggested to community groups that present chamber music that they try a jazz composer. In most cases, people just haven't thought of it. They think that when you say Meet the Composer, it means 'serious' music, in quotes. They don't think about the fact that what Ornette Coleman does is composition. We like to enlighten people." Allan Kozinn, "Getting Composers into the Public Eye as well as the Public Ear," *New York Times*, 26 December 1990.

109. "Meet the Composer/Orchestra Residencies Program," New York Philharmonic Archives, Box 076-01-02.

110. Erlandson, "Meeting—January 20."

111. Raoul Abdul, "N.Y. Philharmonic's Zubin Mehta Keeps Promise," *New York Amsterdam News*, 2 February 1980.

112. Abdul, "N.Y. Philharmonic Hit Again On Charges of Racial Bias."

113. John Rockwell, "Concert: 'Horizons '83,' New Music," *New York Times*, 3 June 1983. In the wake of the festival, Rockwell also wrote: "Aside from those who regretted the paucity of female composers and the absence of blacks, the only real complaint about the selections was that the non-American works seemed to offer a considerably more haphazard view of Westernized composition worldwide than the more carefully and comprehensively selected American scores." Rockwell, "Critic's Notebook: Is 'New Romanticism' Music of the Future?"

114. "Racism Said to Be Rife at Philharmonic," *New York Amsterdam News*, 18 June 1983. Abdul is quoted in the article as saying, "This omission of Black composers is symptomatic of the political climate of our country, which is going back on its



132. Druckman to Duffy, 11 October 1986, Meet the Composer Archives, New Music USA, Box 84.
133. “Financial Summary, 1982–1987, Orchestra Residencies Program, Meet the Composer,” Meet the Composer Archive, New Music USA, Box 55.
134. Wiprud and Lawler, *Composer in Residence*, vii.
135. *Ibid.*, 57.
136. *Ibid.*, 3.
137. Schwarz, “Is There A Composer in the House?”
138. Kozinn, “Getting Composers into the Public Eye as well as the Public Ear.” New Music USA awarded \$884,174 in grant support in 2017; see New Music USA, “2016–2017 Year in Review,” <https://www.newmusicusa.org/yir/2016-2017-year-in-review/>. Meet the Composer’s annual giving was about \$2.5 million in 1990; when adjusted for inflation, it is the equivalent of \$4.9 million in 2019. New Music USA was the result of a 2011 merger between Meet the Composer and the American Music Center.