

**NEW MUSIC:
NEW AUDIENCES**

**Do young people want to
learn about music?**

Heather Maitland

19 to 35 year olds

- They couldn't make sense of what they were hearing
- They were fascinated by what was happening on stage but had no frame of reference to make sense of it
 - “There was a kind of format: the alto sax and then the guitar and then the piano and then the drums. Sometimes it was the drum instead of the piano but every song seemed to be in that format.”*
- Originality was important – they listened out for improvisation and material written by the musicians rather than what they regarded as ‘covers’

Source: Focus groups with 19 to 35s invited to attend a live performance of an unfamiliar music genre. Maitland, H., *The Jazz Services Guide to Getting Bigger Audiences for Jazz*, Jazz Services, 2011

DO THEY WANT TO LEARN?

Some do, some don't

- *“If they combine education stuff with films and stuff - like I remember there was a jazz evening in the Square.”*
- *“With all different types of jazz, Latin Jazz.”*
- *“Street party, yay!”*

Source: Focus groups with 19 to 35s invited to attend a live performance of an unfamiliar music genre.
Maitland, H., *The Jazz Services Guide to Getting Bigger Audiences for Jazz*, Jazz Services, 2011

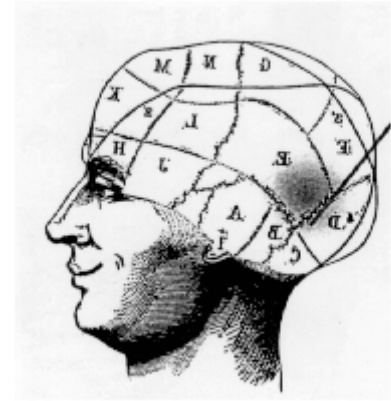
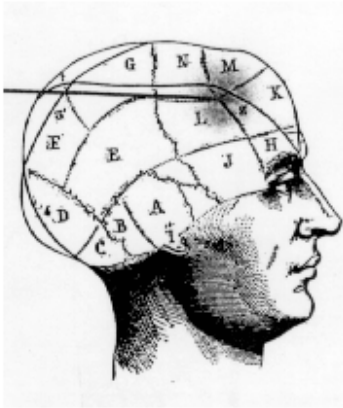
But ...

- They don't want to "learn"!
- They want the pleasure of:
 - understanding something really difficult in a way that felt easy
 - having new ideas
 - using their intellectual skills to imagine, remember, think about something, get new knowledge, think in new ways

Dufresne-Tassé, C., 'Andragogy in the Museum', *Museum, Media, Message*, ed Hooper-Greenhill, E.,
Routledge, 2006

**WHAT DO THEY WANT TO
DISCOVER?**

Different people listen to music in different ways:



Analytical responders



Emotional responders

Analytical responders want:

- To discover unfamiliar music
- To get to know a favourite musician
- To understand the musical/historical context
- Technical excellence
- To know more about specific instruments or a combination of instruments

Emotional responders want to know:

- More about the composer and musicians as people so they can feel more of a connection
- The human stories that inspired the music

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY?

Pre-show talks

- Pre-show talks can add to the understanding and enjoyment of a piece
- They don't make audiences feel more able to engage – they just makes them more likely to interpret the work in the way the creator intended
- A better way is to give audiences an opportunity to reflect afterwards, exploring their thoughts, opinions, feelings
- Play some pieces twice and offer ideas in between

Renee Glass and Catherine Stevens, *Making Sense of Contemporary Dance: an Australian investigation into audience interpretation and enjoyment levels*, fuel4arts, 2005