The Federal Music Project and Concert Culture in Oregon, 1935-1942

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: The Federal Music Project and Concert Culture in Oregon, 1935-1942

The Federal Music Project was a branch of the Works Progress Administration established to employ musicians in need of relief during the Great Depression; a secondary goal of the Project was to provide musical performances and music education to the general public. The latter aim is intertwined with the idea of concert culture, a term that refers to the infrastructure of a given locale to support musical performances, the attendance of and interest in those performances, and the ensuing relationship between performers and the audience. In this thesis, I explore the relationship between the Federal Music Project and musical concert culture in the state of Oregon. I begin by tracing how concert culture is woven into the historiography of Oregon, and then I discuss how Oregon's Federal Music Project, under the leadership of state director Frederick Goodrich, contributed to concert culture in the state in the early twentieth century. This intersection illustrates how concert culture developed in Oregon as a way to connect the state into a national mainstream cultural ideal, an endeavor that was furthered by the Federal Music Project activities in the state.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1935, the United States federal government instituted the Works Progress Administration (WPA) to provide jobs for unemployed American citizens during the Great Depression. Amongst various divisions of the WPA was Federal Project Number One, which supported the arts and cultural initiatives—its five branches included the Federal Music Project (FMP), a program specialized for the employment of performing musicians, composers, and music educators.[1] The FMP had a nationwide impact, with programs supporting activities from big band and symphony orchestra concerts, the composition of new music through the Composer's Forum Laboratories, music education in rural communities, and the study and performance of folk and traditional music. As outlined in the FMP Manual published by the WPA, "[T]he general purpose of the Music Project will be to establish high standards of musicianship, to rehabilitate musicians by assisting them to become self-supporting; to retrain musicians, and to educate the public in an appreciation of musical opportunities."[2] Foundational to the operation and success of the FMP—and Federal One as a whole—was an underlying belief in the importance of public access to the arts and direct financial support for the professionals tasked with providing such opportunities.

The FMP was overseen on a national level by director Nikolai Sokoloff; however, its presence around the United States varied by region. In major cities in the Northeast, already hubs for composers, considerable federal support was allocated to the performance of new works by American composers, as well as biographical and bibliographical projects concerned with the historiography of music in the United States. In contrast, states in the Southern and Western regions of the country saw more attention given to folk and traditional music as well as

[1] The other four branches of Federal One were the Federal Arts Project, the Federal Theater Project, the Federal Writers Project, and the Historical Records Survey.
[2] Nikolai Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project Manual* (Works Progress Administration, 1935), 1.

educational programs, though large ensembles like brass bands and symphony orchestras were also established in larger cities.

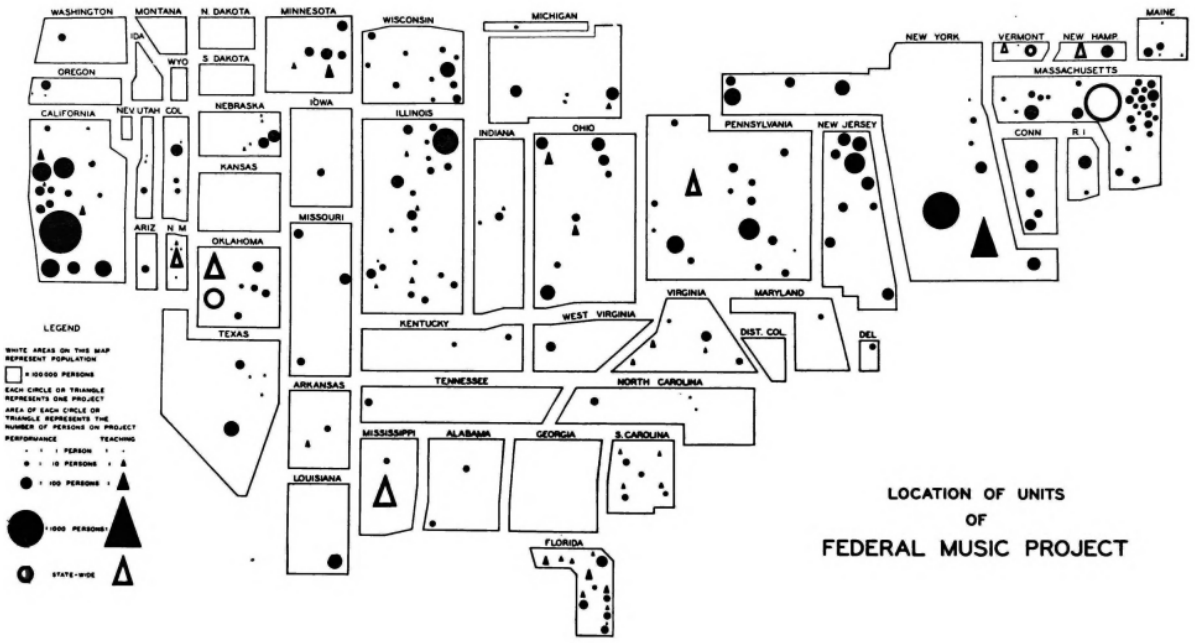

Figure 1: map showing Federal Music Project units across the United States, published in a 1937 report by Director Nikolai Sokoloff on its first year of activities.[3]

The goal of this thesis is to examine the impact of the Federal Music Project in Oregon under state director Frederick Goodrich, with a particular emphasis on the city of Portland, from 1935–1942. The focus of the project will be largely directed towards Oregon FMP efforts related to the performance of concert music in Portland. In turn, this thesis will also explore how local activities of the FMP were informed by cultural-historical conceptions of both the Pacific Northwest region and the state of Oregon in relation to the rest of the country, and furthermore how the FMP fit into the state's existing performing arts culture. The project is musicological in nature, concerned with the role of the FMP in the history and culture of music in the United States in the early 20th century. While the other branches of the Federal Arts Projects can be

[3] Nikolai Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project* (Works Progress Administration, 1937), 6.

understood today through physical artifacts and materials created by the employed artists—for example, written works, paintings, and sculptures—musical performance is ephemeral. As such, the extant materials available to study the Federal Music Project include secondary documentation such administrative reports, concert programs, and newspaper coverage, but seldom the music itself.

The implications of federally supported arts programs raise important lines of inquiry about not only what music was being performed and by/for whom, but also about what drives the relationships between artists and their audiences and between government agencies and the public. Newspaper coverage in Portland speaks to the high frequency and attendance of FMP-related events, indicating a sustained, robust interest in the program at both a local and national level. One article published in the *Oregon Daily Journal* in 1936 proclaims that the "[t]his work by the federal government has created a new and enriched atmosphere in Portland and thrown into the already beautiful picture of the city an air of culture and home spirit," and implores with its headline to "Make Them Permanent."[4] It is the culture and home spirit referenced here is that this thesis aims to investigate.

This thesis builds on existing scholarship on the Federal Music Project in order to examine its impact in an as-yet understudied region. Perhaps the earliest published scholarship on the subject was completed by Cornelius Canon in his 1963 dissertation "The Federal Music Project of the Works Progress Administration: Music in a Democracy," which uses the Project as a framework for exploring the relationship between government and the arts. Canon organizes his argument in three parts: an overview of how and why the Federal Music Project was conceived and its various programs; its role in advancing music in the United States; and the aesthetic effects of music programming in such close relationship with the federal government. He draws the conclusion that the Federal Music Project embodied a democratic vision of music.[5]

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[4] "Make Them Permanent." *The Oregon Daily Journal.* August 30, 1936, 8.
[5] Cornelius Canon, "The Federal Music Project of the Works Progress Administration: Music in a Democracy" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 1963).

Canon's dissertation is also built upon an earlier—but at the time unpublished—study by William McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts,* a broad, inclusive overview and discussion on all five branches of Federal One. Like Canon's, McDonald's own summary of the Federal Music Project hinges on the idea of democracy, arguing not only that the Project promoted a democratic musical culture but also that music itself was "the most democratic of the arts" because of the "universality with which music has been cultivated in the United States."[6] The relationship between music and democracy explored in these early sources is revealing of the motivations behind the Federal Music Project, especially in terms of how such ideas about music were harnessed into conceptions of identity and culture.

Kenneth Bindas' 1995 book *All of This Music Belongs to the Nation* approaches the Federal Music Project from a similar perspective to Canon and McDonald, emphasizing the larger-picture endeavor to make music "democratic" and accessible to the public. However, Bindas complicates this argument somewhat by delving further into the sociological ramifications of the Project, highlighting how directors tended to prioritize music in the European classical tradition in the pursuit of an elevated "culture" at the expense of more popular musics and musicians.[7] This position on culture leads directly into a core subject of this thesis: concert culture. For my purposes here, I understand "concert culture" as the attendance of and interest in performances of concert music and the ensuing relationship between performers and the audience. Because the Federal Music Project aimed "to educate the public in an appreciation of musical opportunities,"[8] it is necessarily concerned with concert culture in the United States. This subject raises various questions, such as: what kind of music was programmed? Who was in the audience? Situating the FMP as a part of this history, this thesis

[6] William McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts: The Origins and Administrative History of the Arts Projects of the Works Progress Administration* (Ohio State University Press, 1969), 584.
[7] Kenneth Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation* (University of Tennessee Press, 1995).
[8] Nikolai Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project Manual,* 1.

will explore how trends in concert culture informed the implementation of FMP activities and how that in turn helped both bolster local identities and represent cities on a national stage.

The discourse of Middlebrow studies also complements how this thesis approaches the relationship between concert culture and the Federal Music Project. In their introduction to a 2020 colloquy on "Musicology and the Middlebrow," Christopher Chowrimootoo and Kate Guthrie state that the middlebrow "included those who hoped to broaden the access to high culture and the institutions and initiatives through which they sought to do so" as well as the "target audiences, who looked to culture for aesthetic education, social elevation, and spiritual edification."[9] While the term "middlebrow" is not used in any FMP documents, nor does it appear in any scholarship on the FMP, given the Project's emphasis on public music education and appreciation I posit that its aims align with the aesthetics and philosophy at work with the rise of middlebrow culture. In her book *The Art of Appreciation,* Kate Guthrie further asserts that intrinsic to the idea of the middlebrow is the association of taste and societal values, and as such appreciation of the arts became interwoven with conceptions of what it meant to be a good citizen.[10] This was then reflected in the growth of music education programming for public, middle-class audiences—the Federal Music Project's focus on concert culture, in congruence with its emphasis on a musical democracy, exemplifies one way that middlebrow culture was promoted in public life.

My methodology for this project involves two main approaches: synthesis of scholarly work on the Federal Music Project and concert culture in the United States, and analysis of primary archival and newspaper sources that anchor this thesis within the context of the regional history of Oregon. The driving questions of this thesis lie at the intersection of these approaches. Through existing scholarly work I trace how the Federal Music Project fit into the

[9] Christopher Chowrimootoo and Kate Guthrie. "Introduction: Musicology and the Middlebrow," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 73, no. 2 (2020): 328.
[10] Kate Guthrie. *The Art of Appreciation: Music and Middlebrow Culture in Modern Britain* (University of California Press, 2021), 4.

existing concert culture while at the same time creating new ways for audiences to access and engage with music. This line of inquiry provides a frame to interpret the historical primary sources, allowing me to bring these larger discussions into dialogue with what was happening with the Federal Music Project in Oregon.

Archival research for this project was conducted at the Oregon Historical Society, whose library contains several pertinent collections; specifically, the Frederick Goodrich Papers, the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition Records, and the Works Progress Administration (Or.). Records all provide integral information and insights regarding the development of concert culture in Oregon and details regarding the Works Progress Administration and the Federal Music Project's operations and reception in the state.

Additionally, Oregon newspapers comprise a significant portion of my primary source material. I focus on coverage in two Portland publications between the years of 1935–1942: *The Oregonian* and *The Oregon Daily Journal.* From these papers I have compiled articles announcing and reviewing both local FMP concerts as well as events of interest around the country. The information provided by these articles includes the music being performed, the locations of concerts, and the variety of events that sponsored performances by FMP ensembles; these data illustrate how FMP activities were part of daily life in Oregon's cities during the New Deal era.

In the following chapters, I will examine how the relationship between the development of concert culture in the state of Oregon and the state's incorporation into the broader mainstream culture of the United States; I will then look at how Oregon's Federal Music Project Units tied into this process. In Chapter One, I explore how music was positioned in Oregon's history in order to establish the existing concert culture environment in which the Federal Music Project later operated—I also consider how the situation in Oregon was influenced by concert culture more generally across the United States. In Chapter Two I turn attention to the activities of the Federal Music Project in Oregon, analyzing how it corresponds with the narrative

identified in Chapter One. Thus, this thesis will illustrate how the Federal Music Project impacted everyday life and concert culture in Oregon, upholding the value of music as an integral part of public life at a time of significant economic and political anxiety.

CHAPTER ONE

"The history of fine art in Oregon is a brief one"

Concert Culture: Definitions and Understandings

Oregon: the End of the Trail, a volume of over five-hundred pages, is the Oregon State Guide written and published by the WPA Writers' project for its American Guide series. Like the other Guides in the series, *End of the Trail* details the history of the state of Oregon, its cities, and its residents up through the 1930s and also includes several suggested tours around Oregon for travelers. The section on music in Oregon, a brief overview contained within five pages, begins thus: "The French-Canadian voyageurs plying the Columbia River from 1818 until about 1845 enlivened their days and nights with gay songs in French patois, but the River of the West seems not to have had a chant peculiarly its own."[11] This statement poses a somewhat bold claim about the admittedly vague generalization of "music in Oregon:" it is not, on its own, a distinctively musical place. A later passage reiterates this idea: "the cowboy, the logger, the miner, and the itinerant ranch-hand sang or chanted as he labored…[n]one of their songs, however, were of local origin."[12] Here, the development of music—in particular, music with European-American roots—in the state is introduced as one of songs, styles, and traditions brought from elsewhere. As this would suggest, the musical culture among the traders and early American settlers in Oregon centered around the enjoyment of music from a far-away home, rather than new music generated in the region itself.

Little scholarship has been published regarding the history of music in Oregon, and such histories that do exist typically concur with this perspective, focusing on the 'import' and performance of music more than the origination of it. This framing is, in a sense, a microcosm of observations made by Douglas Shadle about the performance and attendance of symphonic

[11] Workers of the Writer's Program of the WPA in the State of Oregon, *Oregon: End of the Trail* (Binfords & Mort, 1940), 123.
[12] Workers of the Writer's Program, *Oregon: End of the Trail,* 125.

music in the United States in the nineteenth century, writing that "it is apparent that the story of American orchestral music is both national and international" due to the "realities of cultural and material exchange within the United States and across the Atlantic."[13] Similarly, as the WPA writers assert, music in Oregon—at least, Oregon as an outpost of American settlement under American governance—is both regional and national, and, indeed, international as well.

I would like to take a moment at this juncture to offer definitions of two key terms—concert music and concert culture—in order to clarify how I will be using them for the purposes of this project. *Concert music* typically refers to pieces composed for and performed by choral, orchestral, wind, and chamber ensembles, as well as for solo performers, which the how I understand this term here. Likewise, I take concert *culture* to mean the attendance of and interest in performances of concert music, and the ensuing relationship between performers and the audience; it also encompasses the infrastructure—e.g. performance venues, ensembles and organizations, etc.—of a given locale to support such performances and cultivate public interest. Furthermore, concert culture implies a certain concert etiquette wherein the audience the audience sits in relative silence to listen to the music, often in a secular context*;* in this sense, concert culture differed from other common forms of musical experience at the time because it does not involve participatory music-making or another social activity like dancing. While audience behavior is an integral element in studying concert culture, this thesis examines concert culture largely from the angle of infrastructure, focusing on the development of performing ensembles in Oregon and the concert opportunities available to the public.

Shadle attests to concert culture in nineteenth-century United States as a "vital part[s] of public musical life",[14] anchoring audiences to a perceived cultural identity shaped around the appreciation of concert music. Daniel Cavicchi focuses on the element of listening as a starting point for his own discussion of nineteenth-century American concert culture: "the leisure to

[13] Douglas W. Shadle, *Orchestrating the Nation: The Nineteenth-Century American Symphonic Enterprise* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 6.
[14] Shadle, *Orchestrating the Nation*, 9.

shape a musical life exclusively around listening had emerged as a middle-class cultural ideal by the 1850s and continued to serve as a general marker of urban genteel taste until the early 1900s."[15] He argues that the rise of concert culture heralded a kind of "commodification" of listening[16] that positioned access to and attendance of concerts as a cultural status symbol for the growing urban middle class. Here, the connection to the rise of middlebrow culture, as articulated by Chowrimootoo and Guthrie,[17] adds another layer of detail to the image of concert culture in American life as a space for the aspirant "highbrow" cultural connoisseur. I further propose that concert culture also became an indicator of cultural viability and relevance for cities in the United States. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, this factor would be especially important for the relatively new cities on the west coast, like Portland, as they moved away from the regionalized notion of the American Frontier and established themselves as part of the national urban network.

In this chapter, I will trace how concert music and concert culture are situated in the historiography of Oregon by the early twentieth century. More specifically, I explore how the rise of concert culture reflects Oregon's transition from the 'frontier territory' of popular and expansionist imagination to being incorporated into the United States and bearing the subsequent cultural expectations. I will then turn to a case study of how concert culture was considered an integral part of civic life in Portland through the scholarly work of Portland-based musician Frederick Goodrich, whose meticulously researched *History of the Portland Symphony Orchestra* provides a detailed account of an institution at the center of Portland's concert culture.

[15] Daniel Cavicchi, *Listening and Longing: Music Lovers in the Age of Barnum* (Wesleyan University Press, 2011), 3.
[16] Cavicchi, *Listening and Longing*, 7.
[17] Chowrimootoo and Guthrie. "Introduction," 328.

End of the Trail: Concert Culture and the Frontier

As of the 1930s, when *End of the Trail* was published, the history of concert music and culture in the state was still quite recent; however, the emergence of a general historiographic consensus on topic at the time is apparent. This is generally presented as a chronicle of music being brought to Oregon by white American settlers coming from the east, a product of the westward expansion of the nineteenth century. As the population of settlers grew, sources also reveal a desire to bring concert music to and establish concert culture in Oregon, particularly in the city of Portland, indicative of a drive to bring Portland on par with other major cities around the country in terms of appeal to performers, composers, and audiences.

The Arts chapters in *Oregon: End of the Trail* —focusing on Theater, Music, and Arts and Handicrafts[18]—exemplify this narrative of progress towards a cosmopolitan ideal of 'fine art.' "The history of fine art in Oregon is a brief one," states the introduction to this section, before continuing:

> Among the settlers themselves the urge for self-expression most commonly found release in the singing of homely songs brought from the East and from Europe. Instrument music for such occasions was largely provided by "fiddles" and accordians *[sic]*, many of which had first enlivened the camp-fire gatherings on the 'road to Oregon,' or had eased the nostalgia of gold-seeking miners in distant Eldorados.[19]

This passage weaves music into familiar images of settlers on the Oregon Trail, a social pastime that brought comforts of home along with them. The introduction goes on to describe a tour in 1855 of the performer Stephen C. Massett from San Francisco that took him to several Oregon towns. Recounting a report on Massett's enthusiastic reception in Corvallis, the *End of the Trail*

[18] Workers of the Writer's Program, *Oregon: End of the Trail,* 118-134.
[19] Workers of the Writer's Program, *Oregon: End of the Trail,* 118.

writers conclude that "[a]ppreciation for the arts was inherent in Oregonians from the beginning."[20] This anecdote seems to allude here to the first instance of "concert culture" in the soon-to-be state,[21] and also provides a turning point towards what the writers describe as "fine art" as opposed to the "homely songs" of the frontier. In fact, with the exception of the relatively speculative acknowledgement of the folk-music traditions of Oregon's settlers and some discussion of church hymns,[22] the 'Music' section of the guide is mostly a survey of early performances of concert music and the establishment of musical organizations like choral societies, orchestras, and bands—in other words, the development of concert culture. Notably absent is any mention of indigenous music in the region that long pre-dates American settlement, an omission in line with the colonial conceptualization of pre-statehood Oregon as open, uninhabited frontier.

It is worthwhile here to put this discussion in dialogue with some historiographic ideas of the American West, particularly with regards to the term 'frontier,' which is used prolifically throughout *End of the Trail*. Frederick Jackon Turner's "frontier thesis" of 1893 is a controversial but significant statement on the 'frontier' as a historical topic; his argument, in short, was that 1890 marked the end of the frontier, and in turn the end of the first period of United States history, one defined by expansion and settlement.[23] Turner's timeline is now widely criticized by historians as an oversimplification of the history of the American West as a region and the legacy of colonization.[24] However, the construction of a pre- and post- frontier Oregon does seem to be embraced by the early twentieth-century writers of *End of the Trail,* perhaps because it held the most appeal for a publication like the American Guide series. Echoed in the title of the guide itself, this framework neatly encompasses the conception of

[20] Workers of the Writer's Program, *Oregon: End of the Trail,* 118.
[21] Oregon was officially established as a state around four years later in February of 1859.
[22] Workers of the Writer's Program, *Oregon: End of the Trail,* 124.
[23] Donald Worster, "Beyond the Agrarian Myth," in *Trails: Toward a New Western History,* ed. Patricia Nelson Limerick, Clyde A. Milner, and Charles E. Rankin (University Press of Kansas, 1992), 12.
[24] Patricia Nelson Limerick, Clyde A. Milner, and Charles E. Rankin, eds. *Trails: Towards a New Western History* (University Press Kansas, 1992), xi.

Oregon's history as frontier territory and its present/future as a U.S. State, which would be useful to in marketing the guide to the general American public. Historian Donald Worster highlights another approach for "the western story" as "one of competitive, conformist drives to be in the national mainstream,"[25] which I would argue that this is also expressed to some extent in *End of the Trail*'s Arts sections. Already distinctive for its association with the idea of the frontier, Oregon's new cultural endeavor was to establish itself in the wider national context, and concert culture became one avenue through which it could enter and navigate this "national mainstream."



Figure 2: the Municipal Auditorium in downtown Portland, OR., as pictured in Oregon: End of the Trail. *Opened in 1918, it housed performances by the Portland Symphony Orchestra during the ensemble's early decades. It was remodeled in the 1960s and renamed the Keller Auditorium in 2000.*

[25] Worster, "Beyond the Agrarian Myth," 11.

Pervasive in *End of the Trail's* history of the arts in Oregon is a clear emphasis on the value of 'fine art' as a cultural ideal. The presence and appreciation of fine art is taken to be the main cultural achievement of the first decades of Oregon's statehood, one shared by both artists and their audiences: "Today in Oregon the worthy work of the stage, the concert hall, and the art studio, professional and amateur, enjoys the recognition of discerning patronage."[26] With regards to concert music and culture more directly, the guide claims that "[a]s Oregon developed culturally, symphonic music began to make its appeal."[27] Here, the close association between "culture" and "fine art," as well as the perspective that such a relationship comes from a linear progression or development of culture, is apparent. Symphonic music, or *concert* music, is placed here as a marker of this progress—concurrently, concert culture rises as a result of this new "appeal," an outlet for the newly 'cultured' taste of Oregon's residents. This perspective is not contained to the WPA American Guides series' history of Oregon; for example, a similar sentiment is reflected in Washington State's *Guide to the Evergreen State*, which colorfully posits that "[m]usic became less spontaneous and more refined under the polishing efforts of music masters; it became something to listen to with your hat off."[28]

Perhaps the relative novelty of Oregon and Washington's statehood at the end of the nineteenth century contributes to the seemingly overstated significance of the development of concert music and concert culture in these two states, proof that they have moved beyond the wild-frontier mythology they previously inhabited to become incorporated into the nation of the United States. Even so, this framing underlines a presumption that having the interest in and infrastructure to support 'fine art'—and as such demonstrating a 'cultured,' cosmopolitan public—was, if not quite a prerequisite, an implied component of being a part of the United States. A key component here is that the audiences play just as important a role as the

[26] Workers of the Writer's Program, *Oregon: End of the Trail,* 119.
[27] Workers of the Writer's Program, *Oregon: End of the Trail,* 125.
[28] Workers of the Writer's Program of the WPA in the State of Washington, *The New Washington: A Guide to the Evergreen State* (Binfords & Mort, 1951), 137.

performers and administrators—where the latter provides 'fine art' experiences, the former creates and sustains space for them in their cities. This is reflected in the language of both the Oregon and Washington guides' discussion of music, with phrases like "discerning patronage" and "refined" music as something to "listen to with your hat off" describing the audiences themselves and presenting a particular image of how they might act. Concert culture epitomizes this dynamic, allowing audiences to access the "urban genteel"[29] listening experiences identified by Cavicchi and participate in what Shadle might pin as a form of "national identity formation."[30]

The Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition

As music and concert culture laid out a roadmap for Oregon to align itself with the 'fine art' side of United States culture, it also became a way for the state to assert itself as a cosmopolitan cultural center in its own right. One example of this was the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition, running from June to October, 1905, in Portland, which demonstrated a desire to elevate Portland onto a national stage. *End of the Trail* briefly mentions this event, attesting to its significance not just to both the general history of Portland and the position of music within the city. The guide further implies that music was a central focus of the event, stating that it held the "first 'Music Day' in the history of expositions in the United States."[31] The Exposition proved to be a big draw for artists to come to Portland, and the records of its planning include correspondence between the event administration and dozens of musicians and ensembles—from concert bands and orchestras to family acts and traveling musical variety shows—from around the country applying to perform at the event.[32] One particularly striking document is pair of letters from a conductor named Theodore Beresina advocating for himself to

[29] Cavicchi, *Listening and Learning,* 3.
[30] Shadle, *Orchestrating the Nation,* 9.
[31] Workers of the Writer's Program, *Oregon: End of the Trail,* 125.
[32] Music Correspondence, Mss. 1609, boxes 94-95, Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition Records, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR (hereafter cited as Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition Records).

be appointed an orchestral leader for the Exposition, wherein he professed that he intended not only to "make the music department of the Fair a matter of pride to every Portland citizen" but also, as stated in a second letter, "to make Portland the musical city par excellence of the West."[33]

At the same time that the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition attracted attention from musicians nationwide, other letters from members of the more local musical community indicate that it also provided a unique opportunity to promote Portland's existing musical scene. Lois Steers, a prominent Portland-based concert manager, put in her application for the position of Director of Musical Attractions and listed among her qualifications the fact that she was herself an Oregonian, and as such her "interest in the work is much deeper and would have a more lasting effect upon the musical situation in the Northwest than if the position…were filled by an outsider."[34] Her concern not only for the Exposition itself to be successful but also that it might have a lasting positive impact on concert culture in the region after its closure illustrates a vested interest from Oregon citizens in fostering the arts. Similarly, a local band and orchestra director appealed to the Exposition's Music Committee to consider hiring local musicians; writing on their behalf, he stressed that they took a "lively interest in the welfare of [our] city" and were "actuated by the desire of acquainting our fellow citizens with the fact that Portland possesses in her midst musicians who are fully able to complete with other organizations of the kind."[35]

At the turn of the twentieth century Portland was a major urban center in the Pacific Northwest, capable of organizing and realizing a massive-scale production like the Exposition. It had established itself as a city of interest to outside performers as well as one that boasted its

[33] Letter from Theodore Beresina to H.E. Gosch, 3 August 1904, Mss. 1609, box 94, folder 13, Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition Records.
[34] Letter from Lois Steers to Musical Committee, 2 September 1904, box 95, folder 2, Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition Records.
[35] Letter from Ernest Spitzner to J.C. Ainsworth, 10 October 1904, box 95, folder 8, Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition Records.

own skilled and passionate musical community who were driven to raise the standards of Portland's music scene. Furthermore, documents such as the letters from Lois Steers and the Portland band and orchestra director reveal a conviction that musical life went beyond providing enjoyment and entertainment but was also a great benefit the public and the general "welfare of the city."

Frederick Goodrich and the *History of the Portland Symphony Orchestra*

The musical activities of the Lewis and Clark Exposition took place partly under the leadership of one Frederick Goodrich,[36] an organist, composer, conductor, and music educator who would emerge as a leading expert in the history of music and concert culture in Oregon in the first half of the twentieth century—notably, he is credited as a consultant for the *End of the Trail.*[37] Originally from England, Goodrich moved to Portland in 1904 and lived there until his death in 1952. Clearly invested in the concert culture of his new city, he became a prominent figure in Portland's musical life, and from 1935-1942 he served as the Oregon state director for the Federal Music Project. He also worked closely with the Portland Symphony, playing organ for occasional concerts and writing program notes for the ensemble for almost two decades.[38] A throughline of his career in Portland was his drive to promote musical appreciation in the public through music education initiatives, supporting local musicians and organizations, and also an aspiration to establish the city within a more national concert culture scene.

In addition to being a working musician, Goodrich proved to be a dedicated historian of Portland's local ensembles and a passionate advocate for their importance to civic life. In 1932, he published an essay in the *Oregon Historical Quarterly* titled "Oregon Orchestra Music 1868-1932" that traces a lineage of orchestral and choral ensembles in Oregon which, he argues,

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[36] Workers of the Writer's Program, *Oregon: End of the Trail,* 125.
[37] Workers of the Writer's Program, *Oregon: End of the Trail.* ix.
[38] Death Takes Noted Organist After Long Musical Career," *Oregonian,* January 26, 1952, p.9.

"naturally centers around the city of Portland."[39] In this essay, he also shows great appreciation for music education in Oregon and related organizations like the Portland Junior Symphony Orchestra, reflective of his position as a founding member of the Oregon Music Teachers Association. The development of ensembles in the state is underpinned by discussion of the repertoire they performed—for example, the overture to Rossini's *Tancredi* in 1873 and Dvořák's Ninth Symphony in 1911—anchoring this history to a growing interest and appreciation of concert music in the state.[40] Succinct but highly detailed, the essay demonstrates Goodrich's respect for his local concert culture as well as his knowledge of its history, however, his expertise in this area is carried out to a much greater extent in his work with and about the Portland Symphony.

In February of 1938 the *Oregonian,* the principal newspaper in Portland, published an article announcing that the Portland Symphony Orchestra would be suspended due to budget deficits. The article stated that "after 27 consecutive years of performance the Portland Symphony Orchestra will give its final and farewell concert Monday night in the public auditorium."[41] This would be the Symphony's last performance for nearly a decade. In response to this announcement the following week Goodrich wrote a letter to the editor of the *Oregonian,* which was printed in the paper in early March, to correct a factual error he had noticed: the Portland Symphony had "been before the public in some form or other" for forty-two years, not twenty-seven.[2] Goodrich continued in his letter to summarize in brief the history of the Symphony since 1896, naming each conductor in sequence and describing notable seasons and changes in leadership, thus publicly asserting himself as an expert of the organization. In closing, he conveyed his hope that the Symphony would return in the future and stressed that in

[39] Frederick Goodrich "Oregon Orchestra Music, 1868-1932," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1932): 136, www.jstor.org/stable/20610717.
[40] Goodrich, "Orchestra Music," 136, 138.
[41]"Symphony To Bid Farewell Monday," *Oregonian,* February 24, 1938, p. 11.

order to be successful it must focus its efforts on performing music that, in his opinion, would serve the broadest interests of its community:

> The Portland Symphony orchestra can be revived again on 'stepping stones of its dead self to higher things,' but it means an organization democratic in government and ideals. Its guiding spirits must realize that symphonic literature not only consists of symphonies, but includes any music that requires a symphony orchestra to play it; that American music must have a large share of attention.[42]

This letter offers just a brief glace at Goodrich's interest in the Portland Symphony; earlier in the 1930s, Goodrich had drafted *A History of the Portland Symphony Orchestra*, a book-length manuscript. While draft was never published, it remains perhaps the only attempt to document a narrative history of the ensemble, which still exists in Portland today as the Oregon Symphony. The manuscript, over 200 typed pages interspersed with handwritten margin notes and newspaper clippings, is held at the Oregon Historical Society Research Library. Drawing from oral history, newspaper reviews, and concert programs, Goodrich describes the evolution of the Portland Symphony's performances and programming from its inception in 1896 until the mid-1930s. Evident throughout is Goodrich's deep respect for the Symphony and his belief in its importance to the city of Portland—as he asserts in his preface, "it should be a matter of civic pride to support our Symphony Orchestra to maintain it as a permanent feature of Portland's intellectual and artistic life."[43]

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[42] Frederick Goodrich, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregonian,* March 4, 1938, p. 10.
[43] Manuscript, *A History of the Portland Symphony Orchestra* by Frederick Goodrich, n.d., Mss. 2286, box 2, Frederick Goodrich Papers, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR (hereafter cited as Goodrich, *A History*).

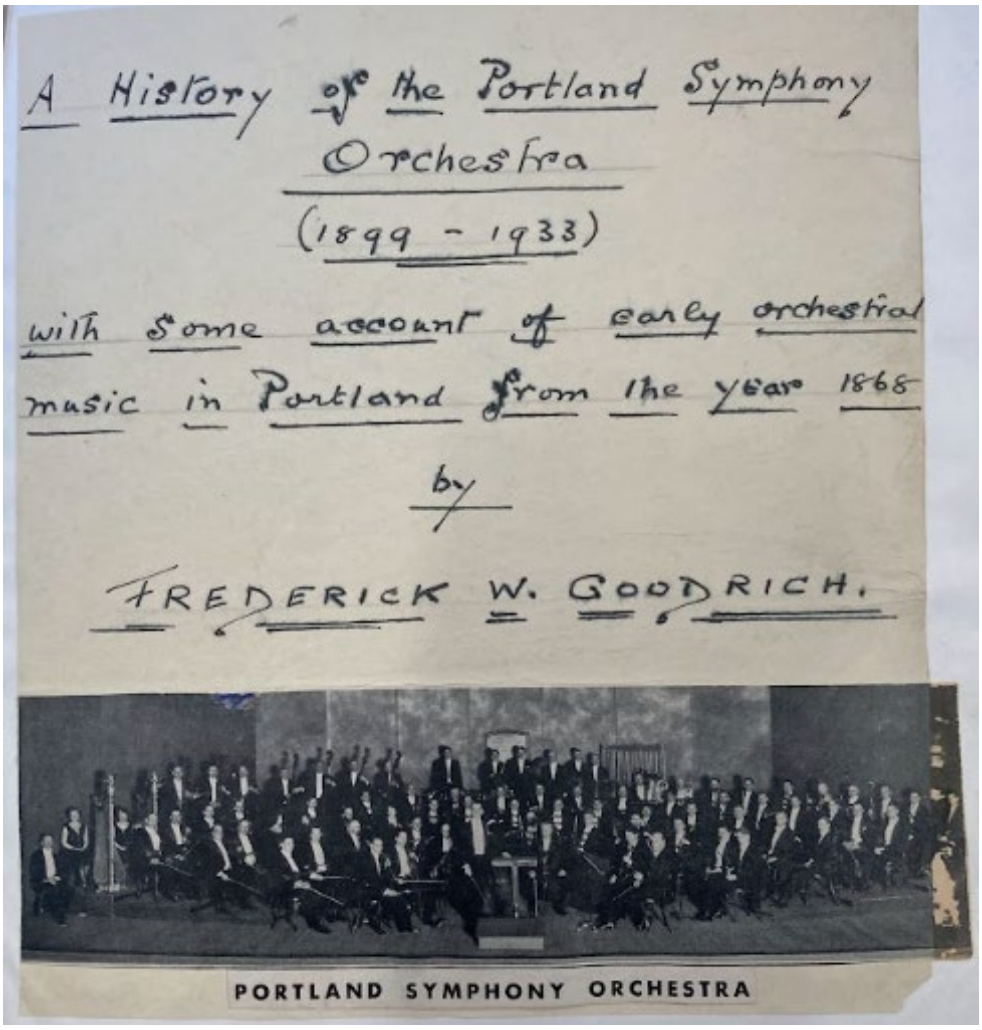

Figure 3: title page of the manuscript of Goodrich's History of the Portland Symphony Orchestra. *Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Mss. 2286.*

The first chapter of Goodrich's *History* describes the role of music within the history of Euro-American settlement in Oregon Territory, going as far back as 1843 with the arrival of settlers via the Oregon Trail and establishment of provisional American government in the region. Speculating that the settlers "brought with them fragments of [the] folk music" that were of "great value in laying a cultural foundation for the future artistic development of their new far western homes,"[44] Goodrich suggests a robust repertoire of songs and hymns among the settler community, emphasizing styles of music with roots in Europe, such as "fine old rugged songs of England…traditional ballads of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales… lieder from Germany, yodels

[44] Goodrich, *A History,* "Forward."

from Swiss mountainsides" and "old Puritan hymns" from several European towns.[45] He further acknowledges the earlier presence of French-Canadian fur traders in Oregon Territory, who may also have influenced this musical landscape. In one interesting aside, Goodrich also takes time to debunk the notion that Oregon's early settlers also brought with them songs by the well-known American composer Stephen Foster, as in 1843 Foster had not yet begun his composing career.[46] Similar to *Oregon: End of the Trail,* Goodrich's summary of early music in Oregon is starkly Euro-centric, ignoring indigenous music and restating the narrative that musical culture did not exist in the state before the influx of white settlers in the mid-nineteenth century.

In this chapter Goodrich presents music as a significant factor in the growth of Euro-American settlement in Oregon, connecting the settlers to European homelands and also establishing a precedent for later musical activity in the state. I discussed earlier in this chapter in relation to *Oregon: End of the Trail,* this perspective raises compelling historiographical questions about the connection between music and national identity in the nineteenth-century American West. By beginning his history in this way, Goodrich positions the Portland Symphony as rooted in an older history of musical traditions and also as a recent development in the broader narrative of American expansion—as such, he would seem to propose that the Symphony was important not just to the history of Portland, but perhaps also to the history of the country as a whole.

Moving on through the late nineteenth century, Goodrich charts the origins and development of orchestral music performance in Portland, an expanded version of the essay he wrote for the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*. He starts by relating oral history testimony from "old residents of Portland," that included musician Simon Harris, who recall the first orchestral concert in 1868 with program including works by Richard Wagner scored by a "Mr. Grob."[47] Here, Goodrich also mentions that printed scores were hard to come by and that Wagner was

[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Goodrich, *A History*, "Chapter 1."

likely unfamiliar to Portland's residents at the time, underscoring the novelty of orchestral music in the city. He goes on to describe several concerts that took place over the next few years for various benefits, including aid for the survivors of the Great Chicago Fire in 1871 and the Great Fire of Portland in 1873. Simon Harris was the conductor for both of these concerts, with orchestras comprised of a combination of amateur and some professional musicians, and the programs were all music by European composers.[48] Overall, Goodrich paints the early years of orchestral music in Portland as a time when groups of mostly amateur musicians would come together to perform only for specific occasions—both the ensembles and their audiences were still getting their footing.

These early chapters of Goodrich's *History* illustrate the musical environment in which the Portland Symphony came into existence. After providing this context, Goodrich turns his attention largely to discussing the evolution of the Symphony's programming, looking at each season in detail and marking whenever a piece or composer was represented for the first time in Portland. In one notable example from the winter of 1919[49] he highlights a concert for its focus on American composers and cites a note on program that read:

> The Mozart symphony on this program has been purposely chosen as an example of the purest symphonic music of the 18th century to contrast with the program music selected from American composers. The American compositions should be considered from three aspects, the academic, the American Indian, and the Negro.[50]

The American compositions referred to here included George Whitfield Chadwick's "Melpomene Overture," Charles S. Skilton's "Two Indian Dances," and Henry F. Gilbert's "Comedy Overture on Negro Themes." While Goodrich notes that this was the first performance of these pieces in

[48] Ibid.
[49] Also this year, Carl Denton was appointed as the Symphony's first permanent conductor.
[50] Goodrich, *A History,* "Chapter 16."

Portland, he does not offer any further comment on this concert. The program note quoted above, however, indicates an intriguing attitude in the early twentieth century and reflected by the Portland Symphony about the relationship between European and American symphonic music as well as some driving inspirations behind American Symphonic music in general. Specifically, this shows the influence of Czech composer Antonín Dvořák, who worked in the United States in the 1890s and wrote that American symphonic music should draw inspiration from Native American music and Black American spirituals in order to reflect an original American character; this stance to have a lasting impact on American concert culture going into the twentieth century.[51] The Indianist movement was also popular at this time, in which white American composers[52] sought to encapsulate an American national aesthetic by appropriating ideas of Indigenous music in their compositions.[53] That the "American Indian" and "the Negro" are named in the program note quoted by Goodrich as two of the three characterizing aspects of American compositions shows a direct connection to these concert culture trends.[54]

Later, in March of 1927, Goodrich reviews a series of Young People's Concerts given to educate children and young adults about classical music—these programs predominantly showcased works by well-known German and Russian composers such as Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, and Stravinsky.[55] Similar to the 1919 program mentioned above, European (and Russian) symphonic music was situated as foundational, providing context and contrast for American works.

The performance of American music was a recurring point of interest for Goodrich, and at the end of his *History* he provides an appendix that consolidates a list of "American

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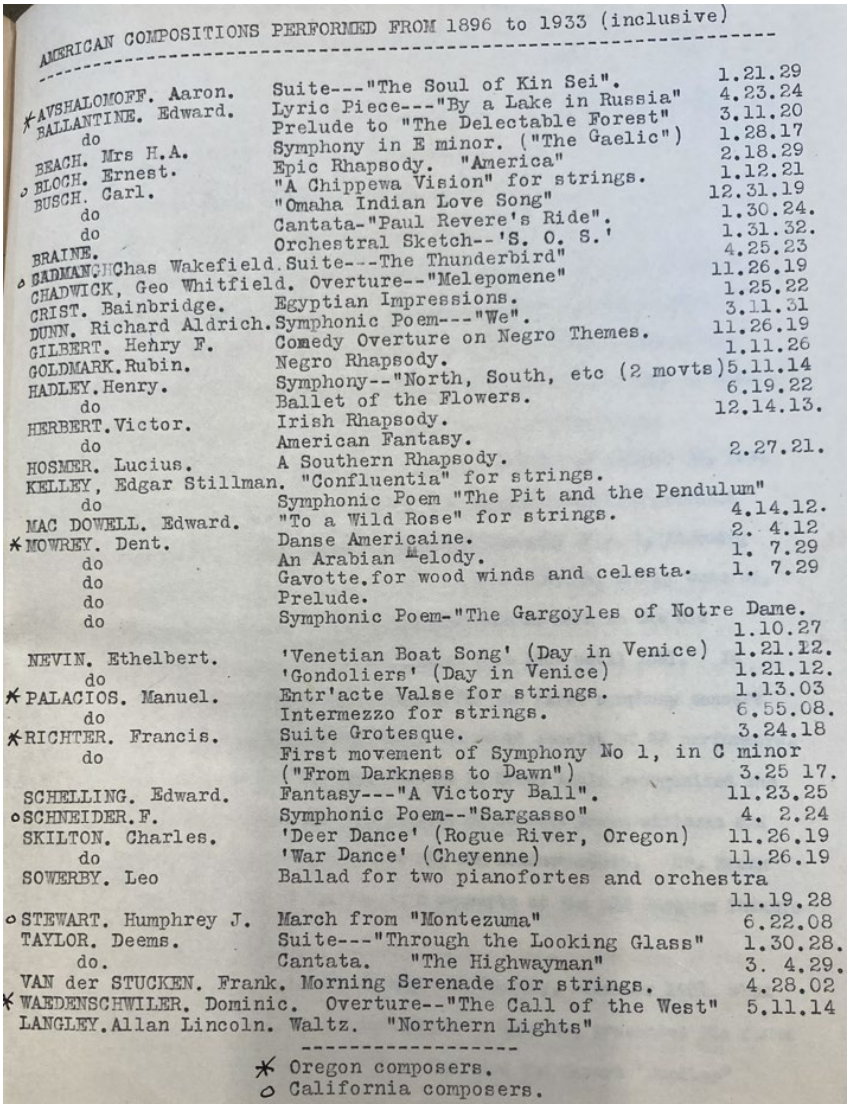
[51] Douglas Shadle, *Antonín Dvořák's New World Symphony* (Oxford University Press, 2022.), 137.
[52] Well-known names include Amy Beach and Edward MacDowell.
[53] Tara Browner, "'Breathing the Indian Spirit': Thoughts on Musical Borrowing and the 'Indianist' Movement in American Music," *American Music* 15, no. 3 (1997): 266.
[54] That Goodrich highlighted the influence of "Negro" music as important to the understanding of American music is particularly interesting in the context of Oregon—the state's Black Exclusion laws were not repealed until 1926, seven years after the concert for which this program note was written. The extent to which the mostly white citizens of Oregon would be familiar with Black American music at this time, outside of exposure through concert music, is unclear.
[55] Goodrich, *A History,* "Chapter 23."

Compositions Performed from 1896 to 1933 (inclusive)."[56] Many of the composers listed were contemporary or recent at the time, and the list includes prominent names such as Amy Beach and Edward MacDowell. Composers from Oregon and California are also identified, reflecting Goodrich's enthusiasm for documenting and preserving records of local, and even regional, artists, reaffirming their place in a national canon.



AMERICAN COMPOSITIONS PERFORMED FROM 1896 to 1933 (inclusive)

✱AVSHALOMOFF. Aaron.	Suite---"The Soul of Kin Sei".	1.21.29
BALLANTINE. Edward.	Lyric Piece---"By a Lake in Russia"	4.23.24
do	Prelude to "The Delectable Forest"	3.11.20
BEACH. Mrs H.A.	Symphony in E minor. ("The Gaelic")	1.28.17
○ BLOCH. Ernest.	Epic Rhapsody. "America"	2.18.29
BUSCH. Carl.	"A Chippewa Vision" for strings.	1.12.21
do	"Omaha Indian Love Song"	12.31.19
do	Cantata-"Paul Revere's Ride".	1.30.24.
BRAINE.	Orchestral Sketch--'S. O. S.'	1.31.32.
○ CADMAN. Chas Wakefield.	Suite---The Thunderbird"	4.25.23
CHADWICK, Geo Whitfield.	Overture--"Melepomene"	11.26.19
CRIST. Bainbridge.	Egyptian Impressions.	1.25.22
DUNN. Richard Aldrich.	Symphonic Poem---"We".	3.11.31
GILBERT. Henry F.	Comedy Overture on Negro Themes.	11.26.19
GOLDMARK. Rubin.	Negro Rhapsody.	1.11.26
HADLEY. Henry.	Symphony--"North, South, etc (2 movts)	5.11.14
do	Ballet of the Flowers.	6.19.22
HERBERT. Victor.	Irish Rhapsody.	12.14.13.
do	American Fantasy.	
HOSMER. Lucius.	A Southern Rhapsody.	2.27.21.
KELLEY, Edgar Stillman.	"Confluentia" for strings.	
do	Symphonic Poem "The Pit and the Pendulum"	
MAC DOWELL. Edward.	"To a Wild Rose" for strings.	4.14.12.
✱ MOWREY. Dent.	Danse Americaine.	2. 4.12
do	An Arabian Melody.	1. 7.29
do	Gavotte.for wood winds and celesta.	1. 7.29
do	Prelude.	
do	Symphonic Poem-"The Gargoyles of Notre Dame.	
		1.10.27
NEVIN. Ethelbert.	'Venetian Boat Song' (Day in Venice)	1.21.12.
do	'Gondoliers' (Day in Venice)	1.21.12.
✱ PALACIOS. Manuel.	Entr'acte Valse for strings.	1.13.03
do	Intermezzo for strings.	6.55.08.
✱ RICHTER. Francis.	Suite Grotesque.	3.24.18
do	First movement of Symphony No 1, in C minor ("From Darkness to Dawn")	3.25 17.
SCHELLING. Edward.	Fantasy---"A Victory Ball".	11.23.25
○ SCHNEIDER. F.	Symphonic Poem--"Sargasso"	4. 2.24
SKILTON. Charles.	'Deer Dance' (Rogue River, Oregon)	11.26.19
do	'War Dance' (Cheyenne)	11.26.19
SOWERBY. Leo	Ballad for two pianofortes and orchestra	11.19.28
○ STEWART. Humphrey J.	March from "Montezuma"	6.22.08
TAYLOR. Deems.	Suite---"Through the Looking Glass"	1.30.28.
do.	Cantata. "The Highwayman"	3. 4.29.
VAN der STUCKEN. Frank.	Morning Serenade for strings.	4.28.02
✱ WAGENSCHWILER. Dominic.	Overture--"The Call of the West"	5.11.14
LANGLEY. Allan Lincoln.	Waltz. "Northern Lights"	

✱ Oregon composers.
○ California composers.

Figure 4: Appendix 2 from Goodrich's History of the Portland Symphony Orchestra

The last few chapters of Goodrich's *History* broach the 1930s. As Goodrich continues his survey of concert programs, he also frames his overview of these years with discussion of the

[56] See Figure 4.

financial uncertainties the Symphony faced due to the Great Depression. In order to keep the Symphony afloat for its 1931-1932 season, it had to rely heavily on ticket sales and donations, as well as the conductor and musicians agreeing to a salary cut.[57] However, the following season (1932-1933) was more hopeful with the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the "promises of a 'new deal'"[58] that would provide federal relief for workers and artists across the country, including musicians through the Federal Music Project. Goodrich devotes his final chapter to crediting all of the vocal and instrumental soloists and guest ensembles who worked with the Portland Symphony Orchestra during its first decades.[59] The list, which goes on for several pages, includes national and international names as well as many who were local to Portland, detailing their instrument or voice part and the piece they performed.

In closing, Goodrich reiterates his belief in the merit of the Portland Symphony as an ensemble with national and international appeal that nonetheless remains rooted in the local history and talent of Portland, imploring that citizens "recognize the value of this great and true civic institution.[60] Throughout this work, Goodrich emphasizes the relationship between the symphony and the people of Portland, assuring that his *History* would first and foremost serve Portland and the ensemble itself, while at the same time maintaining Portland's place on the larger national stage. Also important to note is that Goodrich was himself involved with the Portland Symphony for most of the years he covered, and as such likely knew many of the musicians and conductors he wrote about, making this document in some ways a personal account as well as a historical one.

With *A History of the Portland Symphony Orchestra*, Goodrich upheld the Portland Symphony as integral to the musical life of Portland, intertwined with the city and its own history as much as with the history of symphony orchestras and concert music more generally.

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[57] Goodrich, *A History,* "Chapter 29."
[58] Goodrich, *A History,* "Chapter 30."
[59] Goodrich, *A History,* "Chapter 31."
[60] Ibid.

In comparison with the history of music in Oregon that is relayed in *Oregon: End of the Trail*, written in the same decade that Goodrich wrote his *History*, Goodrich's work is, in many ways, a more in-depth version of the same account: the rise of concert culture was an important factor in the 'cultural development' of the state, which reached an apex with the institution of the symphony orchestra. One point of distinction, however, is Goodrich's deliberate focus on the performance of American—as well as regional—compositions, which is not a topic addressed in *End of the Trail*. This angle adds another layer to the idea of concert culture, as Goodrich seems to propose that United States concert culture should celebrate national, regional, and local composers, recalling the statement he made in his letter to the editor in the *Oregonian*.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I first defined concert music and concert culture to specify how I apply these terms throughout this project and complemented my understanding with a synthesis of scholarship from Douglas Shadle and Daniel Cavicchi, whose work explores the broader societal drives behind United States concert culture. Namely, concert culture in the nineteenth century served younger cities by allowing access to an ideal of cosmopolitan 'fine art,' which in turn aligned them with the mainstream artistic and cultural ideals of the rest of the country. I then outlined how concert culture developed in Oregon from the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth through a close reading of selected primary sources and analysis of the historiographic position of concert culture in the state. First, the WPA state guide *Oregon: End of the Trail* presents a narrative of concert culture as a means for Oregon to transition out of the notion of the frontier into a place that could feasibly accommodate 'fine art' and that had a 'cultured' public to appreciate it. Second, the organization of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition not only put Portland on the map as a cultural and artistic hub on the national level but also was an outlet for the local music community to express their interest in promoting and maintaining concert culture in their city. Lastly, Frederick Goodrich's historical scholarship on

concert culture in Oregon and the Portland Symphony underscores his clear passion for the importance of concert culture within civic life, as well as his vision of what concert culture should look like in an American city. Having established the existing environment of concert culture in Oregon in the 1930s and how it was understood by the public, in the following chapter I will detail how the activities of the Federal Music Project, as directed by Frederick Goodrich, prioritized engagement with and enrichment of concert culture, upholding it as a public good.

CHAPTER TWO
"Make them permanent"

Oregon and the Works Progress Administration

Franklin Delano Roosevelt took office in 1933, succeeding Herbert Hoover over three years after the onset of the Great Depression in the United States. Roosevelt's campaign revolved around his promise of a "New Deal," a plan to revive the credit of the country as a whole and, perhaps more importantly, provide direct relief to Americans affected by unemployment, which had reached over 20%.[61] In 1935, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was initiated under the auspices of the New Deal, a public works program designed to drastically reduce unemployment by creating new jobs. Through the WPA, workers were hired to carry out various public works projects such as building roads, hospitals, schools, parks, and housing. Additionally, jobs were provided to white-collar workers through the WPA's Division of Professional and Service Projects (renamed the Division of Women's and Professional Projects in 1937), with a focus on education, recreation, and the arts.[62]

In the Pacific Northwest, a region whose economy revolved around extractive resource industries such as logging, the Great Depression exacerbated an economic decline that had been ongoing through the past decade, when the absence of wartime demands after the end of World War I caused overproduction.[63] Historian David Jepsen argues that because of this, "the New Deal provided more aid and had a greater effect on the Pacific Northwest than many other parts of the country."[64] Oregon's governor at the time, Charles Henry Martin, who was highly conservative despite having run on a democratic platform and supporting Roosevelt in the 1932 and 1936 presidential elections, was vocally opposed to the WPA. While supportive of New Deal

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[61] Eric Rauchway, *The Great Depression & the New Deal: A Very Short Introduction* (University of Oxford Press, 2008), 55.
[62] Rauchway, *The Great Depression & the New Deal,* 57.
[63] David Jepsen and David Norberg, *Contested Boundaries: A New Pacific Northwest History* (Wiley Blackwell 2017), 233.
[64] Jepsen and Norberg, *Contested Boundaries,* 237.

programs targeting financial stability and conservation, he believed that relief, welfare, and labor legislation programs like the WPA "coddled communists."[65] This was not a unique opinion, echoed by widespread complaints that the creation of jobs was an irresponsible use of public money, as well as Public Opinion polls that indicated a distrust of the WPA and federal relief.[66] Nonetheless, workers in Oregon seemed to view the program favorably, protesting Martin's comments on the WPA and voting him out of the Governor's office in 1939.

Reports from Oregon's State WPA administrator, E.J. Griffith, detail the projects undertaken by the program throughout the state in its first few years, with particular attention to "physical" accomplishments. Griffith's reports are divided by Oregon's three congressional districts[67] and broken into the following sections: Highways, Roads, and Streets; Public Buildings; Recreational Facilities; Conservation; Publicly Owned or Operated Facilities; Transportation; Sanitation and Health Projects; Professional and Technical; Women's Work; Clerical; and Education, Recreation, and Nursery Schools.[68] Each section contains a description of the work carried out, supported by photographs of work sites and tables showing the federal funds allocated to and spent on each project. While the primary purpose of the reports was to document and present quantifiable data on WPA operations, in an introductory statement, Griffith alluded to another side of the program, acknowledging that not only did it benefit workers through providing jobs, but further that those jobs were meaningful and beneficial to the general public:

> No attempt has been made to list or evaluate the social and human effect of the W.P.A. work program, although it is generally accepted by thinking people in American that a

[65] Gary Murrel, *Iron Pants: Oregon's Anti-New Deal Governor, Charles Henry Martin* (Washington State University Press, 2000), 149.
[66] Rauchway, *The Great Depression & the New Deal,* 67.
[67] As of 1935—today, Oregon has six districts.
[68] Reports on physical accomplishments of the Works Progress Administration in Oregon by WPA State Administrator E.J. Griffith, 1938, Mss. 1327, box 1, folders 1-3, Works Progress Administration (Or.) Records, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR (hereafter cited as Griffith, "Report").

> work program as contrasted with the dole system does preserve self respect, conserve old skills, create new skills, and maintain morals and habits of work. Workers maintained in idleness soon lose both ability and incentive for creative and constructive effort. It is also recognized that there are certain physical values to the communities of the various projects that they would not have under the dole.[69]

Similar sentiments about the WPA are expressed in issues of *Progress*, a magazine compiled and published by Oregon's Federal Writer's Project from 1936-1937 that, similar to Griffith reports, informed readers on the activities and developments of various branches of the WPA in the state, as well as program news on the national level. Taking a much more journalistic approach, *Progress* provided monthly updates on the WPA and was distributed to Oregon's WPA workers.[70] In addition to brief articles on WPA activities, the issues also contain testimonials from Oregon citizens speaking to the value of the program. For example, a WPA writer's project writer Charles Oluf Olsen, quoted in the August, 1936 issue, stated: "I sometimes wonder at the critics of the WPA. I wonder if the criticisms would flow half as smoothly were the viewpoint of those intimately affected known?"[71]

Progress paints a rosy picture of the WPA in Oregon, emphasizing its benefit to the state and stories from people who saw their lives positively impacted by it—this is, however, unsurprising for a publication by and about WPA agencies and for a readership of WPA workers. State Administrator Griffith provided a brief forward for each issue, and for July, 1936, he wrote a statement echoing his introduction to the official reports:

> As the months passed by and the various projects in every county throughout Oregon got under way, I have been gratified by the fine spirit of cooperation shown and by the

[69] Griffith, "Report."
[70] Issue of *Progress* magazine, June 1936, Mss. 1327, box 1, folder 4, Works Progress Administration (Or.) Records, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR (hereafter cited as *Progress*).
[71] *Progress,* August 1936.

> splendid results and lasting benefits that are now becoming increasingly apparent to everyone.[72]

Overall, The WPA administration in Oregon showed a clear interest in advertising the program as a significant public good, providing work and supporting public and community infrastructure. Informed by this perspective, in the following sections I will return to the idea of concert culture discussed in the previous chapter and turn attention to Oregon's branch of the Federal Music Project, exploring how it built upon WPA ideals to support the concept of concert culture as part of civic life.

[72] *Progress,* July 1936.

Reports on Oregon's Federal Music Project



Figure 5: (left) cover photo of WPA Progress *magazine shows a Federal Music Project outdoor band concert in Portland's S. Park Blocks. (Top right) WPA Orchestra plays at the Portland Public Library, pictured in* Progress, *August 1936. (Bottom right) WPA Band rehearsal, pictured in* Progress, *August 1936. Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Mss. 1327.*

Within E.J. Griffith's report on the "physical accomplishments" of the WPA in Oregon's third congressional district, there are additional sections for Music and Theater.[73] Why these sections are absent in the reports for the first and second congressional districts is not directly addressed; however, because the city of Portland is in the third district, presumably a great majority of arts initiatives took place there. The Federal Music Project officially began operations in Oregon in January of 1936, and Griffith's two-page report covers its activities from then until December of 1937. Keeping with the tone of his reports on the other WPA projects, Griffith prioritizes numbers and statistics. In summarizing the total, he reports 609 concerts

[73] Griffith, "Report."

given by FMP units in the last two years, attended "conservative estimate" of 492,694 people. Over half of that number was drawn from the attendance of open-air concerts given in parks, and another significant portion from concerts in schools. In the summer of 1937, other WPA units built a bandstand in Portland's South Park Blocks to facilitate nightly public concerts. He wrote that the programs "consisted of many fine compositions hitherto not presented in this city, and each one was prefaced by a verbal explanation."[74]

Griffith also brought attention to the popularity of band concerts, with over 300 concerts presented in total. In addition to giving symphonic concerts, the WPA Orchestra worked with local music students to give them experience playing with orchestral accompaniment and conducting, and chamber ensembles made up of orchestral musicians gave a series of concerts at the Portland Art Museum. Furthermore, The WPA orchestra employed many Portland Symphony musicians after an unusually short season, numbers that were expected to rise when the Portland Symphony's suspension was announced. One other notable inclusion in the report was the description of a very successful production of Giovanni Pergolesi's opera *La Serva Padrona* in 1937, which, it was hoped, would be the first of many similar "light opera" productions.[75]

Griffith's report on the Federal Music Project's first two years in Oregon, while concise, offers substantial insight into the Project's priorities in the state. The report deals almost exclusively with performances of concert music in the city of Portland, as well as some discussion of music education programming. By tracking the numbers of performances given and their estimated attendance, the report also illustrates Portland as having a public interested in and able to support such concerts, again reflecting the notion of the Federal Music Project endeavoring to support concert culture. Griffith closes his report with a statement on the

[74] Griffith, "Report."
[75] "Light opera" was stressed as having a broader appeal due its characters and plots being more relatable to—and thus enjoyable by—the general public.

reception and popularity of the Federal Music Project, as well as its positive relationship with local working musicians, writing:

> In closing it is felt that the Federal Music Project in Oregon is becoming popular with the people generally and that the next few months will see united support of the work we are trying to do…Our public relations are very satisfactory and our dealing with the American Federation of Musicians are very satisfactory at this present time.[76]

A longer and more complete report was written in 1942 by Frederick Goodrich in his position as the state director for the Federal Music project in Oregon, covering the Project's full life in the state between 1935 and 1942. Like Griffith, Goodrich painted the Project as a fully positive organization for both musicians and audiences, a mark of generosity on the part of the Federal Government during a time of intense uncertainty. Goodrich's report begins with the following statement:

> The year 1935 will go down in the history of our country as the year of the Great Depression which threatened to extinguish the art of music and abolish its practitioners and teachers from the entire country. Then came a great ray of hope from the government of the United States and special endeavor to help and reorganize the great and important art of music by special attention to the needs of its practitioners.[77]

In his report, Goodrich breaks down FMP activities into nine different categories: Open-Air Performances, Indoor Concert Work, Symphony Work, Choral Work, Music Teaching,

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[76] Griffith, "Report."
[77] Manuscript, report on the Oregon Music Project, 1935-1942 by State Director Frederick Goodrich, n.d., Mss. 2286, box 1, Frederick Goodrich Papers, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR (hereafter cited as Goodrich, "Report").

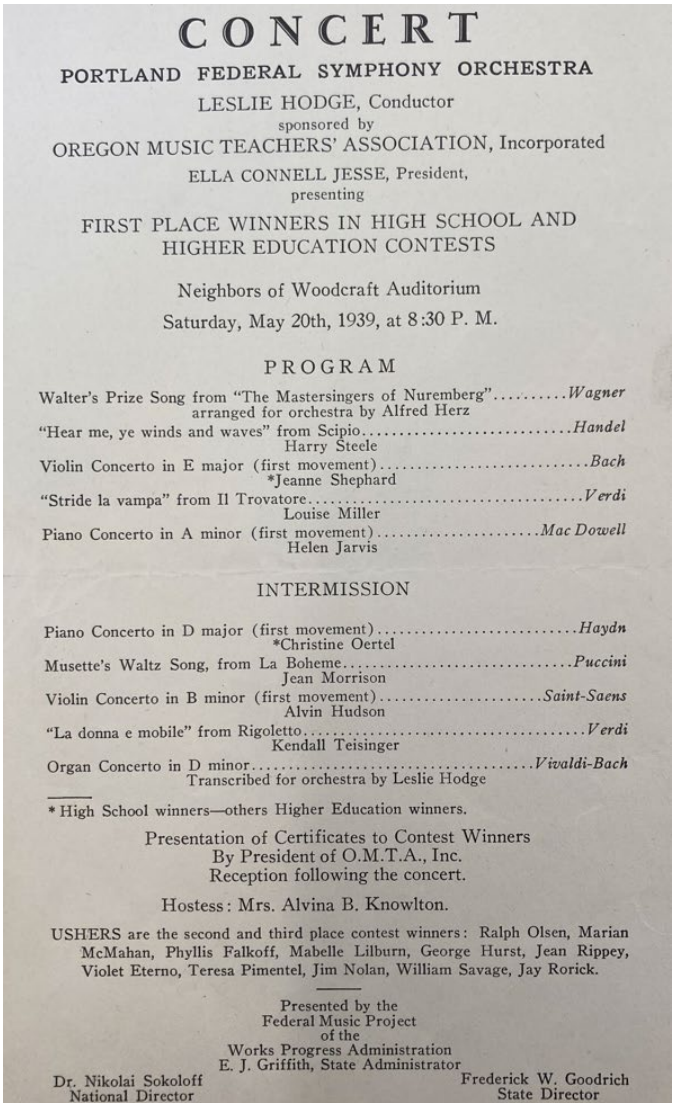
Composition, Radio Work, Project Library,[78] and Opera Performances. For each category, Goodrich describes the nature of employment provided for the musicians, and how it contributed to overall musical life in the city of Portland and throughout the state.

The first two categories are grouped by concert location. On "Open-Air Performances," Goodrich explains that over the course of the Project's operations hundreds of band, orchestra, and chamber music concerts were given at public parks and spaces around Portland. These included several regular concert series,' such as daily midday concerts on the terrace of the post office in downtown Portland, and weekly band and orchestra concerts in the South Park Blocks; for the latter series, the Federal Music Project units coordinated with the National Youth Administration, another New Deal work-relief agency, to build a temporary bandstand to accommodate the performances. Federal Music Project ensembles also played for community dances at Portland Fire Stations and other city events such as the pageant for the City Bureau of Parks, the Portland Rose Festival, and Easter Sunrise Services for the Portland Council of Churches.[79]

In the section about the Indoor Concerts, Goodrich first focuses on educational outreach by Project units, describing regular concerts given at Portland public schools. Speaking to the impact of these concerts, he writes that:

> When these concerts were inaugurated in the school district early in 1936, such events were virtually unknown in these schools. In the later years of the Music Project children who had prepared solo numbers for the contests held annually by the Oregon Music Teachers Association were able to play such numbers with accompaniment by our orchestra.[80]

[78] The Project Library was a collection of band and orchestra compositions compiled and organized by Federal Music Project administrative staff.
[79] Goodrich, "Report: Open-Air Performances"
[80] Goodrich, "Report: Indoor Concert work."



CONCERT

PORTLAND FEDERAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LESLIE HODGE, Conductor

sponsored by

OREGON MUSIC TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION, Incorporated

ELLA CONNELL JESSE, President,

presenting

FIRST PLACE WINNERS IN HIGH SCHOOL AND HIGHER EDUCATION CONTESTS

Neighbors of Woodcraft Auditorium

Saturday, May 20th, 1939, at 8:30 P. M.

PROGRAM

Walter's Prize Song from "The Mastersingers of Nuremberg"..... *Wagner*
arranged for orchestra by Alfred Herz

"Hear me, ye winds and waves" from Scipio..... *Handel*
Harry Steele

Violin Concerto in E major (first movement)..... *Bach*
*Jeanne Shephard

"Stride la vampa" from Il Trovatore..... *Verdi*
Louise Miller

Piano Concerto in A minor (first movement)..... *Mac Dowell*
Helen Jarvis

INTERMISSION

Piano Concerto in D major (first movement)..... *Haydn*
*Christine Oertel

Musette's Waltz Song, from La Boheme..... *Puccini*
Jean Morrison

Violin Concerto in B minor (first movement)..... *Saint-Saens*
Alvin Hudson

"La donna e mobile" from Rigoletto..... *Verdi*
Kendall Teisinger

Organ Concerto in D minor..... *Vivaldi-Bach*
Transcribed for orchestra by Leslie Hodge

* High School winners—others Higher Education winners.

Presentation of Certificates to Contest Winners
By President of O.M.T.A., Inc.
Reception following the concert.

Hostess: Mrs. Alvina B. Knowlton.

USHERS are the second and third place contest winners: Ralph Olsen, Marian McMahan, Phyllis Falkoff, Mabelle Lilburn, George Hurst, Jean Rippey, Violet Eterno, Teresa Pimentel, Jim Nolan, William Savage, Jay Rorick.

Presented by the
Federal Music Project
of the
Works Progress Administration
E. J. Griffith, State Administrator

Dr. Nikolai Sokoloff
National Director

Frederick W. Goodrich
State Director

Figure 6: Concert program from May 1939 of student soloists accompanied by the Portland Federal Symphony Orchestra, Mss. 1523, box 13 folder 6, Performing Arts Collection, Oregon Historical Society.

Here, Goodrich highlights the Federal Music Projects relationship with local schools and its efforts to foster music education and support student musicians, with the school concerts eventually providing opportunities for the students themselves to perform with a professional orchestra. Moving on in this section, Goodrich mentions concerts given at the Portland Art Museum, a series originated by the Project but continued by the city due to its popularity, and music provided for various notable events. These events included the dedication of Timberline Lodge at Mt. Hood—itself a project undertaken by the WPA—a celebration of Abraham Lincoln's

birthday by state government officials in Salem, and the Annual Reception of New Citizens at the Municipal Auditorium in Portland.[81]

The next two sections in Goodrich's report categorize the Projects activities by types of music: Symphony and Choral work. Portland's Federal Symphony was the largest FMP employer of working, professional musicians, and Goodrich gives considerable attention in this section to the ensembles connection to the Portland Symphony Orchestra (PSO), which experienced severe financial hardship during these years. Shortened seasons and eventual suspension for the PSO led to many members finding employment with the Federal Music Project symphony, and in 1939 a new ensemble, the Portland Philharmonic Association, was established with more than two thirds of its members on the Federal Music Project payroll. Under the category of Choral work, Project music teachers and conductors led community choral groups that performed with the Federal Symphony.

In the section on Music Teaching, Goodrich reiterates the relationship between the Symphony and student musicians through its collaboration with the Oregon Music Teachers Association, and also goes mentions other educational initiatives carried out by the Project in efforts to reach diverse communities around the city. Namely, lessons on violin and piano were provided for underprivileged children and adults, music classes were held at South Portland's Jewish Neighborhood House and North Portland's Chinese Mission, and band and voice training given to youth in the African American neighborhood in Northeast Portland. It is worth highlighting the brevity and lack of detail in this survey of outreach initiatives in comparison to the attention given in the earlier section on Indoor Concerts to students working with the orchestra—this is telling of what types of educational programs may have been prioritized by the Project. Also of note in this section is Goodrich's account of the difficulties of keeping such education initiatives within the Federal Music Project itself, as music lessons and classes were

[81] Ibid.

transferred to Education and Recreation projects. Goodrich laments that this resulted in the loss of Project employment for several music teachers and in turn musical instruction given by less qualified individuals, writing that "[t]his procedure hampered the state operations of the Music project"[82] and prevented them from reaching as many students as they otherwise could have. This section illuminates Goodrich's concern, as the director of Oregon's Federal Music Project, for both the professionals employed under his leadership and the quality of education provided to students benefitting from the Project's programs.

Overall, Goodrich's report on the Federal Music Project in Oregon emphasizes the director's interest in the Project units' capacity for educational and community outreach, performing for a variety of audiences and providing as widespread educational opportunities as possible. Historian Peter Gough writes of the Oregon Federal Music Project that it "endeavored to reach those citizens left most disenfranchised by the Great Depression,"[83] citing in particular the outdoor public concerts and free music education opportunities. This is in line with the aims of the Federal Music Project as a whole to "educate the public" in music appreciation,[84] tying back to concert culture a central, guiding idea in carrying out Project programming, and, in turn, idea of middlebrow culture an influencing factor in this approach. Another example of this is seen in the Project's Composers' Forum-Laboratory of New York City, a performance space for composers to share new work through free public concerts. Founder Ashley Pettis saw the Forum concerts not just as opportunities for composers themselves but also as a "teaching tool for building a new educated audience" and, beyond that, supporting music as a "weapon in the class struggle" by giving the public access to new works of music and the creative processes of the composers.[85]

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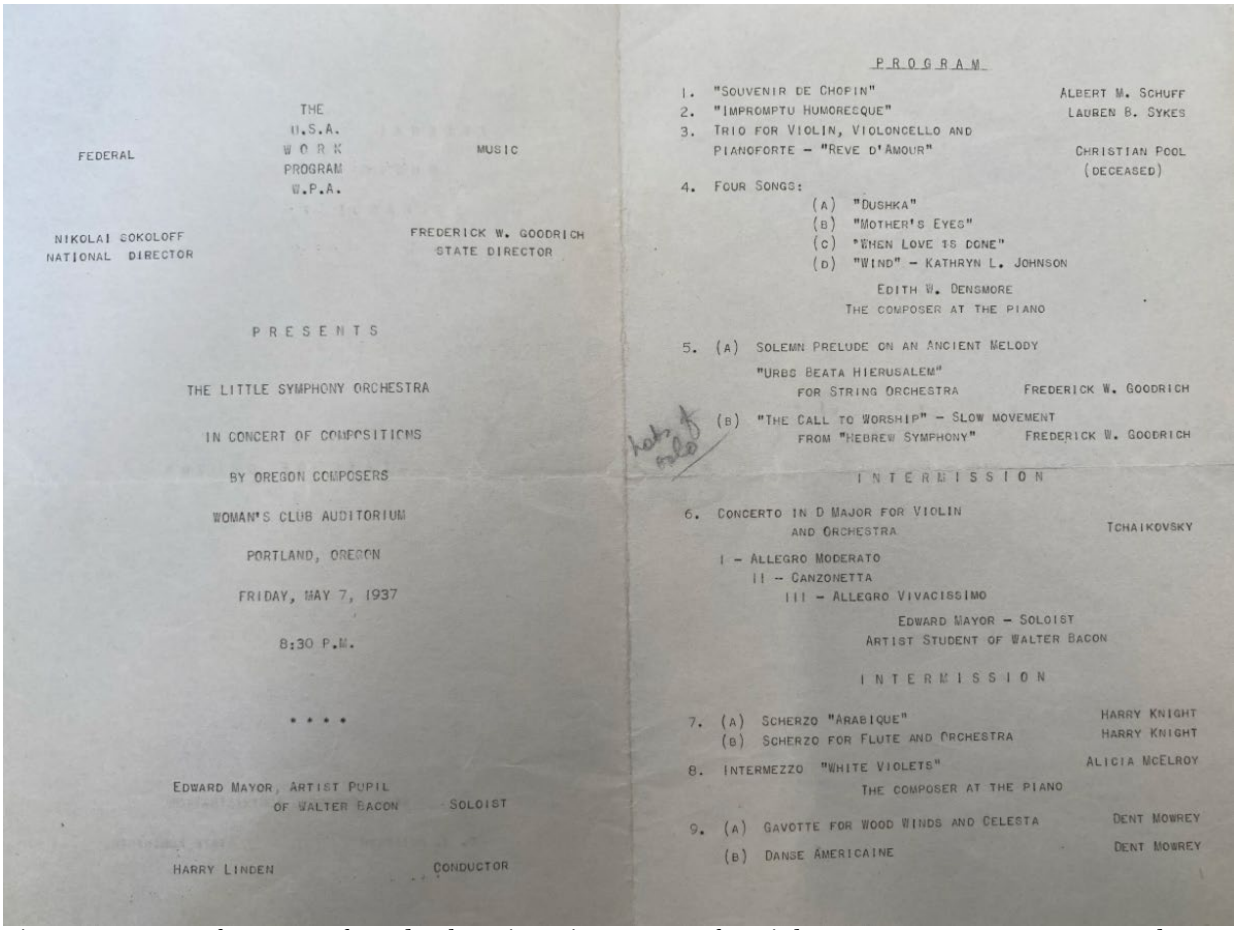
[82] Goodrich, "Report: Music Teaching."
[83] Peter Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal: The Federal Music Project in the West* (University of Illinois Press, 2015), 79.
[84] Sokoloff, *Federal Music Project Manual*, 1.
[85] Melissa de Graaf, "Aaron Copland and the Composers' Forum-Laboratory: A Post-Concert Discussion, February 24, 1937," in *Aaron Copland and his World,* ed. Carol Oja and Judith Tick (Princeton University Press, 2005), 399-400.

While the Federal Music Project in Oregon did not have a unit focused on the composition and performance of new music, it did make efforts to support local Oregonian composers. In the "Composition" section of his report, Goodrich lists several local composers whose works were represented in Federal Music Project performances throughout the course of the Project, including: Christian Pool, Harry Knight, Lauren B. Sykes, Katherine L. Johnson, Frederick W. Goodrich, Manuel Palacios, Albert M. Schuff, Dent Mowrey, Lucille Cummine, Harry M. Grannatt.[86] Additionally, he calls attention to world premiers of two pieces through the Project—Dent Mowrey's tone poem "At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," and "Call to worship," a movement from Goodrich's own "Hebrew Symphony."



FEDERAL MUSIC
THE U.S.A. WORK PROGRAM W.P.A.

NIKOLAI SOKOLOFF
NATIONAL DIRECTOR

FREDERICK W. GOODRICH
STATE DIRECTOR

PRESENTS

THE LITTLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

IN CONCERT OF COMPOSITIONS

BY OREGON COMPOSERS

WOMAN'S CLUB AUDITORIUM

PORTLAND, OREGON

FRIDAY, MAY 7, 1937

8:30 P.M.

* * * *

EDWARD MAYOR, ARTIST PUPIL OF WALTER BACON — SOLOIST

HARRY LINDEN — CONDUCTOR

PROGRAM

1. "SOUVENIR DE CHOPIN" — ALBERT M. SCHUFF
2. "IMPROMPTU HUMORESQUE" — LAUREN B. SYKES
3. TRIO FOR VIOLIN, VIOLONCELLO AND PIANOFORTE – "REVE D'AMOUR" — CHRISTIAN POOL (DECEASED)
4. FOUR SONGS:
   (A) "DUSHKA"
   (B) "MOTHER'S EYES"
   (C) "WHEN LOVE IS DONE"
   (D) "WIND" – KATHRYN L. JOHNSON
   EDITH W. DENSMORE
   THE COMPOSER AT THE PIANO
5. (A) SOLEMN PRELUDE ON AN ANCIENT MELODY "URBS BEATA HIERUSALEM" FOR STRING ORCHESTRA — FREDERICK W. GOODRICH
   (B) "THE CALL TO WORSHIP" – SLOW MOVEMENT FROM "HEBREW SYMPHONY" — FREDERICK W. GOODRICH

INTERMISSION

6. CONCERTO IN D MAJOR FOR VIOLIN AND ORCHESTRA — TCHAIKOVSKY
   I – ALLEGRO MODERATO
   II – CANZONETTA
   III – ALLEGRO VIVACISSIMO
   EDWARD MAYOR – SOLOIST
   ARTIST STUDENT OF WALTER BACON

INTERMISSION

7. (A) SCHERZO "ARABIQUE" — HARRY KNIGHT
   (B) SCHERZO FOR FLUTE AND ORCHESTRA — HARRY KNIGHT
8. INTERMEZZO "WHITE VIOLETS" — ALICIA MCELROY
   THE COMPOSER AT THE PIANO
9. (A) GAVOTTE FOR WOOD WINDS AND CELESTA — DENT MOWREY
   (B) DANSE AMERICAINE — DENT MOWREY

Figure 7: Program from 1937 of a Federal Music Project concert of music by Oregon composers, Mss. 1523, box 13 folder 6, Performing Arts Collection, Oregon Historical Society.

[86] While various records of these composers' careers are held at the Oregon Historical Society, very few of their scores are compiled in these collections.

One notable concert in May of 1937 showcased a selection of works by Oregon composers (see Figure 7) performed by the Project's Little Symphony. Reporting on this concert, a journalist for the *Oregonian* newspaper wrote that "[u]ncle Sam and Frederick Goodrich, state director of the federal music project, are responsible for the program which last night at the Portland Woman's Club building served to acquaint an increasing audience with the works of several resident composers."[87] The article makes clear that the concert was possible through the Federal Music Project and that it served to further Portland's concert culture through supporting local composers.

The Federal Music Project in the Press

While reports from WPA administrative staff like Griffith and Goodrich provide detailed and thoughtful surveys of the Federal Music Project's units and operations, press coverage of the Project illuminates how the general public was informed about the Project's programs as well as how they received it into their own lives. The first mention of the Federal Music Project in Portland's newspapers was an announcement of the establishment of the Project in 1935 to professional musicians and music teachers seeking relief through the WPA, directing them to apply for "appearance before the board of audition" for employment under the WPA's new "music section.[88] During the following years of the Project's presence in Oregon, dozens of articles were published weekly in the *Oregonian* announcing local concerts and programming and, in other cases, reporting on Project activities at the national level. One example here is the news that Marion Bauer, a composer from the Pacific Northwest, had a selection of her pieces represented at the New York Composers Forum-Laboratory, worthy of mention in the *Oregonian* because she had previously lived in Portland for some years.[89] Another article, from early in 1936, discusses the surprising breadth of the Federal Music Project across the country,

[87] "Symphony Honors Local Composers," *The Oregonian,* May 8, 1937, 2.
[88] "WPA Authorities Ready to Receive Musicians Pleas," *The Oregonian,* November 19, 1935, 5.
[89] "Miss Bauer Scores High as Composer," *The Oregonian,* February 2, 1936, 37.

attesting to the value of the Project as an aid to the "jobless musician" and countering the notion that it was a "pure 'makework'[90] proposition."[91]

Numerous articles in the *Oregonian* discus more specifically the value of the Federal Music Project in the city of Portland. A particularly interesting example is an advice column responding to a father's complaints of his son's violin practice. With the title "Musical Ability Declared a Valuable Asset in Children," columnist Marian Miller encourages the father to support his son's interest, and goes on to recommend the educational services of the Federal Music Project: "The federal music project of the WPA has been a great inspiration to many young persons in Portland, I happen to know. Over 200 mothers have been singing in groups, studying music for which their souls were craving. Over 300 boys have been playing in harmonica bands."[92] The Federal Music Project's summer outdoor concerts in particular inspired considerable praise, becoming viewed as an invaluable addition to civic life and, furthermore, as an attraction to people from outside of Oregon to visit Portland. Reporting on a visit from National Director Sokoloff, the *Oregonian* wrote that "people touring the west will hear Portland has summer symphony concerts and will know that this is a city of culture, a really civilized metropolis, so will come here for a longer stay than usual,"[93] while another headline from the following year claims "City Becomes Music Mecca For Summer."[94]

In general, the newspaper coverage of the Federal Music Project in Portland reinforces what the official administrative reports claimed: that the Project was successful in providing employment to local musicians and music teachers and in turn both helped to ameliorate the dire situation of unemployment and also enriched musical and cultural life in the city. The press, as such, would seem to be in agreement with the reports written by the Project's administration.

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[90] "Makework" is a term used to describe a job with little to no practical value—it was often applied by critics of the WPA to projects seen as a waste of federal funds.
[91] "Thorough Training Given Musicians at WPA Centers," *The Oregonian,* April 12, 1936, 43.
[92] "Father Advised to Rejoice in Small Son's Interest in Taking Violin Lessons," *The Oregonian,* December 21, 1936, 4.
[93] "Music Essential, Says Conductor," *The Oregonian,* July 10, 1936, 13.
[94] "City Becomes Music Mecca for Summer," *The Oregonian,* June 27, 1937.

Considering this, it's important to acknowledge that these materials provide a fairly simplistic, one-sided account of these events—because they focus on reporting the positive impact of the Project, they contain little nuance or attention to criticism the Project might have received. Additionally, the documentation of the Project discussed in this chapter is concerned almost entirely with performance and teaching of concert music, reconnecting with the notion of concert culture that was the focus of the first chapter of this thesis. The presence of middlebrow ideals is also apparent, particularly in the use of language equating musical opportunity with values of civility and high-culture. Goodrich's, and Sokoloff's, priorities as leaders of the project were seemingly centered on the support of concert culture as the most valuable, unifying outlet of musical culture for civic life in the United States.

CONCLUSION

The Federal Music Project was revolutionary at its time for being part of the first initiative in the United States to provide funding for the arts from the federal government. Implicit here, then, are ideological questions regarding exactly what kind of arts programming should be funded by the government and the extent to which the government should be involved in the arts. Such questions proved to cause complications for other branches of Federal One, particularly the Federal Theater Project, which was dissolved in 1939 after being investigated by the House Un-American Affairs Committee (HUAC) for funding productions that seemed to sympathize with Communist politics.[95] This is revealing of some of the internal conflict within government surrounding New Deal policies—the WPA in particular caused concern for its apparent proximity to Socialism. The Federal Music Project, however, largely escaped such criticism. One potential reason for this was that the priorities of Nikolai Sokoloff, the FMP's national director, were influenced by his preference for concert music from the traditional Western classical canon; in comparison, Hallie Flanagan, the Federal Theater Project director, was closely associated with modernist and avant-garde circles.[96] While Sokoloff's own more conservative taste did not mean that the Federal Music Project in practice was restricted only to 'classical' programs, I would argue that it did contribute to the Project's emphasis on concert culture, as reflected in my discussion of concert programming in Oregon in the second chapter of this thesis. To this point, in his early study on the Project William McDonald wrote that "[i]t was less that the national director disdained or neglected non-orchestral music than that he failed aggressively to encourage it."[97] Overall, that the Federal Music Project tended to be viewed more favorably than other projects by entities—like HUAC—that were suspicious of the New Deal suggests that the endeavor to support the growth of concert culture was seen as a safer and

[95] Rania Karoula, *The Federal Theatre Project, 1935-1939: Engagement and Experimentation* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 179, 184.
[96] Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal,* 12.
[97] McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts,* 605.

more acceptable use of federal dollars than, for example, the production of plays that could have subversive political messages. To go one step further, it also implies that placing value in concert music because it is considered as refined or as 'fine art' was a major factor in the direction of Federal Music Project.

Another important consideration in the discussion of federally funded arts is how the arts are framed in relation to the public—in other words, how and where the arts fit into the public sector, which then becomes the foundation for justifying the allocation of federal funds to arts programs. In the case of the Federal Music Project, the importance of music in the public sector was asserted from two angles: first, to provide opportunity and employment to practicing musicians; second, to provide education and musical entertainment to audiences. In Nikolai Sokoloff's preliminary statement of information and manual for the implementation of the Project, he presents these two purposes as being in a symbiotic relationship with one another, writing that the Project aimed "to create a larger intelligent musical public by developing high standards of musical taste and knowledge, thereby creating a demand for professional employment."[98] Thus, the employment of musicians to support the development of concert culture would in turn stimulate a need for professional musicians and employment opportunities.

The National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities, established in 1965, is Federal One's most prominent successor in federal arts funding. Herman Kenin, a musician from Portland who served as the president of the American Federation of Musicians during the 1960s, gave an address to Congress on behalf of the union in support of establishing the NEA. His language in this address echoes many of the ideas reflected in reports on the Federal Music Project by Sokoloff and Goodrich, appealing to the cultural and societal importance of music:

[98] Sokoloff, *Federal Music Project Manual,* 2.

> American music and musicians cannot long survive as prideful and necessary elements of our civilization without the helping hand of government…In short, what I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that the vital contribution of music and the other arts in determining the quality of our changing environment must not be overlooked.[99]

In her work on the Federal Writer's Project, Christine Bold states that the key difference between Federal One and the National Endowments is that while the former considered the arts a "social good in an era of unemployment," the latter considered them a "moral good in an era of public corruption;"[100] the vague "corruption" refers broadly to the situation of social and political upheaval in the United States during the 1960s, including factors such as the assassination of President Kennedy, the Civil Rights movement, and protests against the U.S. military's involvement in the Vietnam war and the draft. Bold's perspective indicates a shift in the perception of the labor of artists and the place of their work in the public sphere that is shown in the differing motivations behind implementing plans for federal funding. Indeed, Kenin's address does speak apprehensively of the "changing environment"—what Bold interprets in her work as "public corruption"—defending music and musicians as a vital part in maintaining the integrity and quality of American "civilization," which is the crux of his argument he put before Congress. Likewise, the focus of the Federal Music Project is more directly centered on the issue of employment, a pragmatic solution to ensure that the situation of the Great Depression did not prevent musicians from having opportunity to work and, in turn, the public having access to music.

At the same time, the concern for moral values Bold identifies as underlying the advent of the NEA/NEH were not totally absent from the aims of the Federal Music Project. Numerous sources, from early documentation of the Project's operations to public attitudes towards it,

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[99] Transcript of oral statement by Herman Kenin to Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives, n.d., Mss. 2161, box 1, folder 1, Herman Kenin Papers, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR.
[100] Christing Bold, *The WPA Guides: Mapping* America (University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 206.

attest to the deep value of music in public life. McDonald wrote that a core idea of all of the Federal Arts Projects was that "the arts, no less than business, agriculture, and labor, are and should be the immediate concern of the ideal commonwealth."[101] Similarly, Nikolai Sokoloff, in his first preliminary report on the Federal Music Project, proclaimed that "[a]ll of this music belongs to the Nation. The emergency which brought the government to the aid of the unemployed musician may very well bring about a cultural future in America."[102]

The Federal Music Project, and Federal One as a whole, was an ambitious program for funding the arts; it was not perfect in design nor execution, at times revealing cultural prejudices or tensions between the government's and the artists' priorities. Within the broader agenda of the WPA it constructed an optimistic vision of artists as workers in the United States, consistently upholding the democratic nature of the arts as intrinsic to American national identity. The language in Kenin's address supporting the National Endowment for the Arts demonstrates that this position still stood decades later as an argument in favor of federal arts funding. This kind of idealism may not hold up under close scrutiny, particularly considering examples like the dissolution of the Federal Theater Project, and indeed the Federal Music Project's somewhat narrow and restrictive approach to supporting music and concert culture. At the same time, looking back from the twenty-first century where the arts and humanities face severe cuts in federal funds, such a program as the Federal Music Project, which placed great value on the work of musicians and the importance of music education, seems relatively radical. It showed that models for federal funding of the arts exist and have been successful—in other words, it envisioned a system in which working and aspiring musicians did not have to question the place of their craft in a society in which profession and identity are so intertwined, where passion and pragmatism can be supported in tandem.

[101] McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts,* ix.
[102] Sokoloff, *A Preliminary Report on the Work of the Federal Music Project*, 24.

A return here to the connection between the middlebrow, a striving towards an idealized form of high art that was conflated with moral values, and concert culture, an avenue providing access to such cultural and artistic experience, makes clear the overlap between what was perceived as social and moral goods in relation to music. In this thesis, I have shown how a case study of the Federal Music Project in Oregon encapsulates this intersection. First, the rise of concert culture in the state heralded one way in which Oregon came to participate in the "high art" mainstream cultural ideal of the United States, reflected in the way music was written into histories of Oregon's early decades of statehood. Second, the Federal Music Project in the 1930s continued this narrative, further establishing the city of Portland in particular as culturally valid in comparison to other cities because of its established, accessible concert culture.

Research for this thesis uncovered multiple avenues for further study, particularly in the areas of musical traditions alive in Portland outside of the western-centric concert culture explored here and local composers active during the early twentieth century. Considering the educational outreach work done by Federal Music Project teachers in various neighborhoods of Portland, a closer examination of the relationship between the Federal Music Project and the existing musical scenes in these specific communities is a rich line of inquiry. Along similar lines, looking into how popular and non-western music scenes in Portland—for example, the Cantonese Opera performances prevalent in Portland's Chinatown since the 1920s—may have interacted with Federal Music Project outreach is another area of potential. Additionally, a more thorough survey of local Oregon composers and their musical output would important context to the picture of concert culture in the State.

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