
THE AMERICAN PIANO

Anthony de Mare and Steven Mayer, piano
Joseph Horowitz, Artistic Director

Joseph Horowitz - Biography

JOSEPH HOROWITZ, Artistic Director

Joseph Horowitz is an artistic consultant, teacher, and author. He is one of the most prominent and widely published writers on topics in American music. As an orchestral administrator and advisor, he has been a pioneering force in the development of thematic programming and new concert formats. His six books offer a detailed history and analysis of American symphonic culture, its achievements, challenges, and prospects for the future.

Beginning in 1999, Mr. Horowitz has served as a free-lance artistic consultant for orchestras throughout the United States. For the New Jersey Symphony, he is Festival Consultant and Humanities Coordinator, and curates an annual three-week Winter Festival. For the Pacific Symphony [California], he is Artistic Advisor and curates an annual American Music Festival.

Mr. Horowitz has recently formed the Post-Classical Ensemble, a chamber orchestra in Washington, D.C.; he is Artistic Director and Angel Gil-Ordonez is Musical Director. The debut concert, on May 1, 2003, was an all-Revueltas program including the film *Redes* with live music. (The Washington Post proclaimed the Post-Classical Ensemble "a welcome, edgy addition to the musical life of Washington." The National Gallery has invited the Ensemble to repeat its *Redes* presentation in 2003-2004.) Pursuing a programming template Mr. Horowitz developed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, all the orchestra's concerts will incorporate popular or vernacular music.

In 1999, Mr. Horowitz became Director of Historical Projects for the American Symphony Orchestra League (whose president, Charles Olton, has called him "our nation's leading scholar of the symphony orchestra"), in which capacity he is Project Director for a three-year NEH-supported National Education Project on "Dvorak in America." Since 2003 he has served as an artistic advisor to Naxos's landmark "American Classics" recordings, an unprecedented documentation of American classical music in performance.

From 2000 to 2002, Mr. Horowitz taught at the Eastman School of Music. In Spring 2001, he was a Senior Fellow at the Arts Journalism Program at Columbia University. He was subsequently the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and an NEH Fellowship in support of a book-in-progress on the history of classical music in the United States.

From 1992 to November 1997, Mr. Horowitz was associated with the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra (Resident Orchestra of the Brooklyn Academy of Music), first as Artistic Advisor, then as Executive Director. During these six seasons, he implemented a new programming strategy stressing thematic content and interdisciplinary scope, and was instrumental in engaging Robert Spano as Music Director. He pioneered in juxtaposing orchestral repertoire with folk and vernacular sources, engaging gamelan orchestras, flamenco dancers and singers, and Russian and Hungarian folk artists. He was the architect of the orchestra's afternoon "Interplays," and its More than Music in-school program. Also during his tenure, the orchestra was a national leader in forging collaborative programming relationships, sharing its thematic weekends with the Chicago, New World, and San Antonio Symphonies, and with Houston da Camera. Mr. Horowitz was also the editor of six 35- to 70-page Brooklyn Philharmonic program books, of which "The Russian Stravinsky" won an ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award for excellence in writing on music. During Mr. Horowitz's tenure, the Brooklyn Philharmonic received the 1996 Morton Gould Award for Innovative Programming, awarded annually to a single American orchestra by the American Symphony Orchestra League (ASOL), as well as five ASCAP/ASOL awards for Adventuresome Programming.

Alex Ross wrote in *The New Yorker* (Nov. 1997): "When Joseph Horowitz became its executive director, in 1993, [the Brooklyn Philharmonic] more or less went off the grid of American orchestral culture. . . . In Brooklyn,

(continued)

the subscription-series template – overture, concerto, symphony – has been thrown away. Programs have become miniature weekend festivals; often, an afternoon chamber concert takes the weekend's theme further." Another critic, Linda Sanders, wrote in *Civilization Magazine* (May 1998): "The Brooklyn approach essentially redefines the symphony orchestra from purveyor of the canon to community center for music and musical knowledge. . . . If one could distill the current progressive thinking about an orchestra's purpose in the 1990s, Brooklyn comes closest to embodying it."

Mr. Horowitz has taught at the Eastman School, the Manhattan School of Music, the New England Conservatory (NEC), the Mannes College of Music and as a Visiting Professor at the Institute for Studies in American Music at Brooklyn College. He was Director of the 1999 NEC Spring Festival, a series of 10 concerts exploring "Musical Boston a Century Ago." Also at NEC, he is helping to create a program of "guided internships," bringing NEC students into Boston public school classrooms. In association with the American Symphony Orchestra League and the New Jersey Symphony, he is superintending a project – including a Young Readers book and a DVD -- to use the story of Dvorak in America to introduce music in inner-city schools. He is also the creator and Artistic Advisor of a touring program/residency featuring the Takacs String Quartet and the Hungarian folk group Muzsikás; it debuted in Aspen in June 2001 and currently tours to Carnegie Hall and other major venues. In a similar capacity, he serves as Artistic Advisor to the Toradze Piano Studio, shaping thematic presentations that tour widely.

A prolific writer, Mr. Horowitz was a music critic for *The New York Times* from 1976 to 1980. From 1981 to 1994, he was the Program Editor and principal annotator for the Kaufmann Concert Hall of the 92nd Street Y. At the Y, he also served as Artistic Advisor for the Schubertiade, in which capacity he planned repertoire and directed an annual all-day Schubert symposium, a focus of national attention for its innovative formats. Peter G. Davis wrote in *New York Magazine* (1990): "Joseph Horowitz's extensive, informative, and elegantly written program notes are unquestionably the best in town."

Of Mr. Horowitz's books, *Conversations with Arrau* (1982), published in six languages, won an ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award for excellence in writing about music. (Andrew Porter of *The New Yorker* called it "one of the best books about a performing artist ever written.") Mr. Horowitz's *Understanding Toscanini – How He Became an American Culture-God and Helped Create a New Audience for Old Music* (1987) was named one of the most distinguished books of the year by the National Book Critics Circle; it is most recently published in paperback for the University of California Press as *Understanding Toscanini – A Social History of American Concert Life*. (According to Robert Craft in *The New York Review of Books*: "No one concerned with the fate of the arts in our jingoist and dangerously confused society can afford to ignore Joseph Horowitz's courageous, necessary, and for the most part irrefutable cultural case history.")

A third book by Mr. Horowitz is *The Ivory Trade – Piano Competitions and the Business of Music*. The first book-length study of music competitions, it also explores issues in piano pedagogy, career preparation, and the fading centrality of the piano as a musical icon. (According to Richard Dyer in *The Boston Globe*: "Joseph Horowitz is the best current analyst of the awkward dance of commerce and culture in our musical life. *The Ivory Trade*, like *Understanding Toscanini*, is a case history and a disturbing one.")

Mr. Horowitz's *Wagner Nights: An American History* (1994), the first history of Wagnerism in America, received the Sonneck Society's 1996 Irving Lowens Award, widely regarded as the highest honor for books about American music. It concentrates on the cultural life of New York City in the 1890s; its central characters include Antonin Dvorak. (According to Edward Rothstein in *The New York Times*, "Historical excavations can sometimes be news in themselves, altering our understanding of the present. Such is the case with Joseph Horowitz's fascinating new book.") Mr. Horowitz is most recently the author of *The Post-Classical Predicament – Essays on Music and Society* (1995). His forthcoming books are *Dvorak and America: in Search of the New World* (a young readers book for Carus Publishing, April 2003) and *Classical Music in the United States: A History* (Norton, 2004).

Mr. Horowitz has also contributed articles to *Words on Music*, edited by Jack Sullivan (1990); *Wagner in Performance*, edited by Barry Millington and Stewart Spencer (1992); *Dvorak and His World*, edited by Michael

(continued)

Beckerman (1993); *Cultivating Music in America: Women Patrons and Activists since 1860*, edited by Ralph Locke and Cyrilla Barr (1997); *The Philadelphia Orchestra: A Century of Music*, edited by John Ardoin (1999); and *Wagner and the Jews*, edited by Dieter Borchmeyer (2000).

Mr. Horowitz regularly contributes to the New York Times Arts & Leisure Section and to the Times Literary Supplement (UK). He has contributed, as well, to The New York Review of Books, The American Scholar, American Music, The Musical Quarterly, 19th Century Music, Opera News, The New Grove Dictionary of Music, and The New Grove Dictionary of Opera. He is the author of the articles on "classical music" for both The Oxford Encyclopedia of American History and The Encyclopedia of New York State (forthcoming). He is a frequent lecturer at music schools, universities, and music festivals throughout the United States. He has participated, as a speaker, in the Salzburg Seminar, the Bayreuth Festival, and in the annual conventions of the American Musicological Society, the Society for American Music, and the American Symphony Orchestra League.

###