

Chapter 5

A critical analysis of classical music broadcasters in the UK, reviewing the range of programmes they provide and examining how these organisations have adapted their business models since 1989.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with both the availability and range of programmes of classical music on both radio and television in the UK, examining how these organisations have adapted their business models over the last 20 years in order to increase listenership. My analysis will include a review of the breadth of classical music programmes in both commercial and publicly funded organisations. My research will incorporate comments from a number of practitioners in classical music broadcasting through face-to-face interviews and also via written responses. As will become evident, the data will focus principally on radio because this medium provides more classical music content than television in the UK. My experience is that classical music is (still) regarded as a specialist area of the business, even within the overall Arts sector. The resulting air-time is commensurate with this perception as this chapter will demonstrate. Even broadcasts of arts programmes are limited in a similar way. John Casey, Director of Sky Arts, comments that there are 37 million people in the UK who claim to have an interest in the arts, yet coverage on television does not equate to that high figure.³¹⁶ As classical music is a smaller genre within the arts portfolio of interests, it appears to have little chance of receiving a breadth of coverage on television. Commercial and non-commercial television channels do offer a range of arts material; however it is radio that provides the most classical music content. A glance through the Radio Times, the weekly television and radio listings magazine, and its website, emphasises the extent of classical music programming on radio.³¹⁷ I shall examine the range of programming on both media outlets with an

³¹⁶ Casey, J. (2009), 'Culture shows', *Arts Professional Magazine*, Issue 23, 5th October 2009

³¹⁷ <http://www.radiotimes.com>

analysis of the developments in the classical music industry since the *Four Seasons* and illustrate how the sector has developed its business models accordingly.

5.2 Sky

There are classical music programmes broadcast on television in both the commercial and publicly funded sectors. The growth in content especially during 2008 has been marked. The satellite broadcaster BSkyB provides two arts channels: Sky Arts 1, Sky Arts 2 and also a selection of programmes in this genre on Sky Arts HD. Sky Arts 2 is of particular interest to my research because it broadcasts high quality classical music content, including relays from New York's Metropolitan Opera House.³¹⁸ Having originally bought a 50% stake in the independent network the Arts Channel in 2003, Sky bought out the organisation two years later. The resulting merger means that Sky is now the major provider of arts programming on commercial television in the UK. An idea of the content of the Sky Arts networks is worth exploring and is set out below:

5.2.1 Sky channels

Sky Arts 1 features programmes on contemporary arts (such as rock music and documentaries); Sky Arts 2 provides programmes devoted to the more traditional arts (including opera, classical music and dance). By way of example, in 2009 Sky announced a collaboration between itself and Glyndebourne Opera.³¹⁹ The deal included live and pre-recorded broadcasts from the 2009 season at Glyndebourne; the programmes would be relayed on both Sky Arts 2 and Sky Arts 2 HD, with future plans to include filming Glyndebourne on Tour. To make the broadcast more populist in order to bring a bigger audience than might first be expected, the former politician and broadcaster Michael Portillo was invited to present the broadcasts.³²⁰ This particular business initiative indicates two significant points: first, that opera is attractive as a business proposition to a large, commercial organisation; television

³¹⁸ http://www.hdtvuk.tv/2008/08/sky_doubles_art.html

³¹⁹ Clarke, K. (2009), 'Sky Arts turns camera on Glyndebourne', *Classical Music Magazine*, London, Rhinegold Publishing Ltd, 25th April 2009, p.9

³²⁰ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2009/jun/30/michael-portillo-fronts-glyndebourne-coverage>

provides a marketing opportunity for companies through advertising placements. Second, the broadcasts present an extra dimension to the accessibility of the genre; the relays reach a wider range of consumer (that is more than just the traditional opera supporter) because of the breadth of viewer reached by television. This makes good business sense for both parties. A third channel, Sky Arts HD, screens a combination of programmes that have been broadcast from Sky Arts 1 and 2, and, as HD implies, is transmitted in high definition. The Sky Arts website indicates the content of these channels clearly.³²¹

Access and breadth of content are worth investing in if the purchaser can afford to pay the monthly subscription. Sophie Turner Laing, the Managing Director of Sky Entertainment, makes a valid comment about the range of programmes her network can offer: *'to us they [viewer ratings] are not the be-all and end-all because the viewers have already decided to be with us.'*³²² This suggests a change taking place in the market with a commercial broadcaster offering a genuine alternative to public funded arts programmes. Paid-for arts programmes are providing programmes for those who have shown commitment by taking out a subscription. Julian Johnson comments that when classical music *'has adapted to the new technological and commercial world, it has achieved some startling successes.'*³²³ Although Johnson goes on to cite Classic FM radio as a success, I also include Sky's arts coverage as another example. Digital coverage of arts and music programmes are supplied on highly sophisticated televisions that provide sound and vision of high quality which matches the broadcasting content.

5.3 BBC television content

The BBC is another major provider of cultural programmes and is able to offer a range of serious arts content through the public funds it receives from the licence fee; these types of programmes are broadcast on BBC 2 and BBC 4. Broadcasts of classical music are divided between what content is offered on the terrestrial channel (BBC 2)

³²¹ <http://www.skyarts.co.uk>

³²² Brown, M. (2008), 'Sky to double programmes on the arts', *The Guardian*, 19th August 2008, p.7

³²³ Johnson, J. (2002), *Who Needs Classical Music?*, Oxford 2002, OUP, p.22

and what is broadcast on the digital network BBC 4 (available digitally through Freeview, which the user is able to access free after purchasing a set-top box). Broadcasts of the Proms provides a clear example. The Proms concerts are the most high profile television broadcasts of classical music on the BBC. During the 2008 and 2009 seasons, BBC 2 relayed a concert from the Proms festival every Saturday throughout the whole series, coupled with regular slots on BBC 4. For the 2010 festival, the broadcasts have been increased to every Thursday and Friday (on BBC 4 and also on BBC 3), along with the regular Saturday viewing on (BBC 2).³²⁴ In contrast Radio 3 broadcasts (as it always has) every concert from the Proms season.³²⁵ This does highlight the discrepancy in the amount of classical music content between radio and television.

5.3.1 BBC 2 and BBC 4

Outside the televised Proms broadcasts, there are programmes that are shown on television, but the amount of air-time is limited in comparison with Radio 3. An illustration of the extent of programming on BBC 2 and 4 during 2008 is detailed below:

23 May: The Passions of Vaughan Williams; this is a documentary to mark the 50th anniversary of the death of the composer;

7 June: Harrison Birtwistle-The Minotaur; this is a world premiere transmission from the Royal Opera House, of a new opera by one of the most important living composers.

August/September: a new series of Maestro exploring the art of conducting with eight famous amateurs learning how to conduct with one of the BBC's own orchestras, the BBC Concert Orchestra; the eventual winner is then given the chance to conduct, live, in the annual Proms in the Park concert in September (on the Last Night Of The Proms itself).³²⁶

The three examples described above demonstrate the variety of programming provided by BBC on television. The programme on Vaughan Williams is a

³²⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/proms/2010/broadcasts/television.shtml>

³²⁵ Wright, R. (2008), 'Here's one we played earlier', *The Guardian*, 19th August 2008, p.26

³²⁶ Email from Victoria Bevan, Head of Communications, BBC Radio 3 and Classical Music Television, 23rd May 2008, Appendix 66

documentary which investigates the life of one of the UK's most important composers. The screening of the *Minotaur* is a live broadcast of the first performance of the piece from the Royal Opera House. The third is a series which allows the programme makers to attract a diverse audience with different musical interests, as varied as the participants themselves. *Maestro* is one successful way of widening the availability of classical music and especially on a multimedia platform. The programme was available for access over the internet as well as on television.

In June 2008, a further case of a different form of classical music broadcasting was broadcast on BBC 4. The cellist Julian Lloyd Webber and members of the Birmingham Conservatoire, improvised live during a ten-minute news bulletin at 7pm one evening, as part of the New Generations Arts Festival.³²⁷ This last instance is a case in point. It is innovative broadcasting being given the opportunity to be broadcast on a digital platform. If this model of programming was offered for transmission on a purely terrestrial network (BBC 2 or BBC 1), then the likelihood of the broadcast going ahead would have been reduced. This is because competition internally within the BBC for a programme being broadcast on a terrestrial channel is that much greater because the audiences are larger than those viewing a digital network. These are a varied group of programmes with a wide subject content that can appeal to different interests in this genre of music. Added to this is the power of television through its audience reach. For example, the first episode of BBC 2's *Maestro* programme achieved a reach of 1.7 million.³²⁸ This is more than the regular figure for listenership to Radio 3. The first part of 2009 recorded 1.99 million for the station.³²⁹

It is interesting to note that from January 2010 BBC 4 is broadcasting a second series of composer films made by the distinguished film maker Christopher Nupen. Indeed Nupen is also a feature of the Sky Arts schedule with 22 of his films receiving

³²⁷ [http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/is Julian Lloyd Webber trying to grab the headlines with his improvised BBC broadcast?](http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/is-Julian-Lloyd-Webber-trying-to-grab-the-headlines-with-his-improvised-BBC-broadcast?)

³²⁸ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2008/aug/13/tvratings.television>

³²⁹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2009/05_may/07/rajar.shtml

broadcasts on the satellite channel. It is a sign of a slow change in the growth of classical music content being transmitted on television.³³⁰

Television provides a global perspective for classical music, whether through a commercial or publicly funded operator. The first Three Tenors concert bore witness to the potential breadth of audience reach of classical music on television. The screening of specific opera productions to outside venues, such as the one in June 2009 in Trafalgar Square, London or the well-established opera and ballet screenings of Covent Garden productions were extended in 2009 to venues all over the country throughout June and July on outdoor screens.³³¹ National venues were chosen including Bristol, Cardiff, Middlesbrough, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Swansea and Waltham Forest as well as an existing list of cooperating towns (from Aberdeen to Swindon, from London to Manchester); this is an initiative dating from 2000 and available through corporate sponsorship (in this case by BP).³³²

In 2009, a further genre in the sector was introduced; as well as broadcasts of opera in cinemas (such as those from the Royal Opera)³³³ there was also the first live cinematic screening of a choral concert from King's College, Cambridge that took place. Handel's *Messiah*, was broadcast on 5th April 2009, at the beginning of a week of music to mark Easter.³³⁴ The performance has since been shown in a number of cinemas not only in the UK but also in Europe (including Austria, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands and Spain).³³⁵

5.3.2 Classical music coverage on terrestrial channels

There is merit in evaluating briefly the public service requirements for the non-BBC terrestrial and commercial networks and how they affect the amount of coverage of

³³⁰ Fawkes, R. (2009), 'Classical music tv: "underserved, not dead"', *Classical Music Magazine*, 7th November 2009, p. 43

³³¹ <http://www.musicalcriticism.com/news/roh-summer-screens-0509.shtml>

³³² Ibid.

³³³ <http://www.roh.org.uk/cinemas/index.aspx>

³³⁴ <http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/events/easter-at-kings/easter-2009.html>

³³⁵ Jenkins, L. (2009), 'King's to sing in first ever live cinematic screening,' *Early Music Today*, February/March edition, p.7

music programming. The requirements apply to ITV1, GMTV, Channel 4, Five, S4C and Teletext. On these stations, there are occasional series on the arts and classical music, in particular on Channels 4 and 5. For example, Channel 4's website reiterates its public service remit, as originally asked for in the 1980 Broadcasting Act: '*Channel 4 is provided as a public service for disseminating information, education and entertainment...*'³³⁶ One case in point is a series of programmes from the composer and presenter Howard Goodall. Goodall has produced six of his own television series for Channel 4: *Howard Goodall's Organ Works* (1996), *Howard Goodall's Choir Works* (1998), *Howard Goodall's Big Bangs* (2000), *Howard Goodall's Great Dates* (2002), *Howard Goodall's 20th Century Greats* (2004) and *How Music Works* (2006).³³⁷ The success of these programmes is evaluated by not only the number of programmes that Goodall was commissioned to write, but the number of awards these programmes have received. Two Royal Television Society Awards and a BAFTA (British Association of Film and Television Award) nomination are two examples.³³⁸ The public service obligations, laid down by Government, must be adhered to. For example, during peak times there is a quota of programmes whose content should be of a documentary and religious nature as well as specific news programmes. There is a core list of Public Service Broadcasting requirements mutually agreed by the broadcasting organisations and these are important in assessing the type and quality of classical music provisions.

Nowhere is this as important as for networks which broadcast to a specialist (and therefore niche) market. Raina Konstantinova, Director of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) Radio Department adds: '*only a broadcasting system not solely dependent on mass appeal can preserve broadcasting as a cultural phenomenon that is more than a mere business operation seeking profits for shareholders.*'³³⁹ Konstantinova adds that by having public funded channels such as Radio 3, they not only promote the intellectual and artistic life of a nation, but more importantly they '*bring high quality music and arts to*

³³⁶ <http://www.channel4.com/culture/microsites/W/wtc4/regulation/remit.html>

³³⁷ <http://www.howardgoodall.co.uk/presenting/pres.htm>

³³⁸ <http://www.howardgoodall.co.uk/cds/biog/Awards%20page.htm>

³³⁹ Email from Raina Konstantinova, Director European Broadcasting Union Radio, 21st November 2003, Appendix 68

different geographical places – where people cannot afford to visit the Covent Garden (Royal Opera), the Metropolitan (home to New York Opera) or the Vienna Philharmonic concerts.’³⁴⁰ This is focused provision of classical music that the UK provides. This is good provision and one not mirrored in other countries because of the uniqueness of the BBC charter.

5.4 Overview of classical music on BBC Radio and Classic FM

Classical music has been very much a part of the BBC since the broadcaster’s inception. What was termed ‘serious’ (and what would be defined today as classical as opposed to pop) music was available on the Home Service from 1939 and also on the Light Programme from 1945. Classical music was given its own home in 1946 when the Third Programme was launched, becoming BBC Radio 3 in 1967.³⁴¹ Radio 3 was regarded as the traditional home for classical music. Not only is there a gap of 46 years between the network’s nearest competitor, Classic FM, but its breadth of content is wider than Classic FM’s. Its remit encompasses live music, new works, drama and arts, all of which underpin the station’s programming. The domination of the classical music broadcasting by Radio 3 up to 1992 was evident. Pre-Classic FM, Radio 3’s competition in broadcasting classical music repertoire was to be found on other BBC Radio networks (in particular Radios 2 and 4). The network also had a natural advantage in being a national network. Radio 3 has an average 15 minute weekly reach of 2 million listeners³⁴² and, because it is part of the BBC, receives its funding through the licence fee.

Classic FM is a national radio station within the Global Radio group, itself a fusion of two companies Capital Radio and GWR. The formation of Global Radio in May 2008 resulted in the new company becoming the UK’s largest commercial radio group with approximately 18.5 million listeners.³⁴³ Classic FM has a bigger audience (compared to Radio 3) with a reach of 5.4 million listeners on average per week and

³⁴⁰ Ibid., Email from Raina Konstantinova

³⁴¹ http://www.fact-index.com/b/br/british_broadcasting_corporation.html

³⁴² <http://www.bbc.co.uk/annualreport/trust/performance/service.shtml#radio>

³⁴³ <http://www.thisisglobal.com/radio/>

operates exclusively on a commercial basis, like its owners.³⁴⁴ This can be defined as operating without any Government or public subsidy. Income is derived from on-air advertising.

These two networks provide the most comprehensive range of classical music content in the UK. I shall critically evaluate their contribution as the chapter progresses. The content of both stations offers a contrasting view of broadcasting classical music. But also the function of the music played on the stations is different. Johnson states that *'classical music, in as much as it is to survive commercially in this environment, is forced into serving functions derived from entertainment music...the idea of doing nothing else besides listening to music, for any sustained period of time, is foreign to many people.'*³⁴⁵ The implication is that a concentration on the music itself for a specific period of time is geared towards the content provided by Radio 3 and having classical music as a form of background music is more appropriate to Classic FM's schedule. However, the stability of both their listenership figures suggests that the content both networks broadcast, and the market segments they broadcast to, are sufficiently different to allow them to operate in the market place. This is analysed in detail later in the chapter.

5.5 Listenership figures

Traditionally there is, as might be expected, competition between BBC radio and commercial radio companies. In fact the radio medium as a broadcasting mechanism is in good health despite a slight decrease in listenership during 2009 on both commercial and BBC radio, but an increase via digital platforms (see page 92). The Rajar data for Q4 2009 (up to the beginning of January 2010) revealed that 20.9% of all radio listening was via a digital platform, a rise of over 2.5% in comparison to Q4 of 2008.³⁴⁶ Digital listening is comprised of digital radio (DAB), digital TV (DTV) and listening online. All three areas increased its listenership year on year.³⁴⁷ The

³⁴⁴ <http://www.thisisglobal.com/radio/classic-fm/>

³⁴⁵ Johnson, J. (2002), *Who Needs Classical Music?*, Oxford 2002, OUP, p.37

³⁴⁶ http://www.rajar.co.uk/docs/2009_12/2009_Q4_Digital.pdf

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

following table (Figure 1) from the BBC Annual Report and Accounts 2008/2009 illustrates a clear analysis of the closeness of the BBC to its commercial rivals in radio listening:³⁴⁸

BBC radio reach versus main competitor groups	%
All BBC Radio	
07/08	66.3
08/09	65.6
All Commercial Radio	
07/08	62.1
08/09	61.6
Virgin AM/FM*	
07/08	4.9
08/09	4.3
Classic FM	
07/08	11.3
08/09	11
TalkSPORT	
07/08	4.8
08/09	4.8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now broadcasting under the Absolute brand 	

Figure 1

Radio 3 is a separate case to its commercial rival Classic FM. It is funded by public money and therefore has to argue its case for the use of those funds so it can operate. The station's business process will therefore be markedly different from that of its

³⁴⁸ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/annualreport/exec/performance/radio/index.shtml>

commercial rivals. Its business judgement will be illustrated in how it uses the public money it receives. Radio 3's audience figure is also significantly less than most of its BBC sister networks (see page 163). The BBC's 2008/2009 annual report stated that Radio 3's audience figure was 2 million with Radio 4 reaching 9.7 million, Radio 2 with 13.3 million and Radio 1 reaching 10.8 million.³⁴⁹ I have chosen these stations out of the 10 national networks broadcast by the BBC because they are the nearest in terms of content to Radio 3. Perhaps the most significant point in relation to the network's expense to the BBC is that the cost per listener is 6.3 pence for Radio 3, compared to Radio 1 which has 0.6 pence, Radio 2 0.5 pence and Radio 4 1.3 pence.³⁵⁰ This highlights the expense of running the Radio 3 network.

5.6 Public Service Broadcasting

The defence of classical music funded by public money can be seen as part of a wider brief, that of the role of public broadcasting. It is important therefore to contextualise Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) to my thesis, examine the definitions of PSB, its origins and its relevance today. The purpose of PSB will put into context how classical music is enhanced within the UK through broadcasts and performance via the use of public money. There is also a business element that emerges, namely the income that classical music brings to the UK economy. Public Service Broadcasting is an area of particular interest because of the Government White Paper, published in March 2006, on the future of the BBC which led to the organisation's subsequent charter renewal in 2007.

There is a continual discussion about the use of public money for the BBC to fund its array of services. Inevitably this debate includes whether there is a need for (only) public money to be used by BBC, whether that money is being spent wisely, and also whether there is value for the licence payers' money in the way that it is spent. The last question can be expanded to ask if the BBC spends its money to the optimum effect in order to provide programmes for the public benefit. This has an impact on classical music provision. This area of the music sector is expensive and, as is

³⁴⁹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/annualreport/exec/performance/radio/radio3.shtml>

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

illustrated on page 163, Radio 3 takes a large proportion of the BBC radio budget for a listenership which is low in audience figures. The advent of Classic FM in 1992 adds to the pressure on the BBC in showing that it offers value for money. Not only does the new station operate without public subsidy, its content also consists of classical music and it broadcasts that content nationally. Classic FM was therefore regarded as a rival to Radio 3's position of being the only provider of classical music in. This is unusual in the commercial radio sector, which is pre-dominantly region based.

5.6.1 Definitions of Public Service Broadcasting

Defining PSB and placing it in context of the media industry is an important first step. Choosing a definition and then applying as a second step will put the role of radio and subsequently music on radio in context. From this point, it will then be possible to have a clear picture of the business model employed by classical music organisations. The provision of a service in the national interest is what is required of Public Service Broadcasters. But there is no one all-defining term. Even the 1986 Peacock Report on financing the BBC says in its definition: *'We had some difficulty in obtaining an operational definition from the broadcasters of public service broadcasting...but its meaning is reasonably clear from its usage.'*³⁵¹

Peter Davies from Ofcom (and a former BBC employee) says it is not about market failure, that is providing programmes that no-one could afford to make: *'BBC is here to provide services which are universal – very much like public libraries were set up – everyone pays for it and everyone should benefit from it. And that has to cover a range of interests and it is about helping to raise people's sights. It is why the BBC is here, to inform, educate and entertain and to reflect a whole range of culture.'*³⁵²

Tim Suter, former Head of Broadcasting policy at the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), subsequently at Ofcom and now Managing Director of a freelance media consultancy suggests three clear possible definitions. First, the

³⁵¹ Cmnd 9824 (1986), Report of the Committee on Financing the BBC, The Peacock Report

³⁵² Interview with Peter Davies, formerly at BBC, and now Ofcom, Appendix 67, p.3

provision of everything for everybody, that is: *'a little bit of everything for everybody-a balanced schedule...the purpose of the BBC is to give you some news, some factual programming, some classical music, some light entertainment, some films.'*³⁵³ A second version is to fill those parts of the schedule that the commercial market wouldn't find: *'it isn't about variety but we believe in Opera as public service because nobody else would do it...a genre argument that becomes a market failure argument.'*³⁵⁴ Linked to this is a third definition, concerning audiences: *'you should not try and serve audiences already well served. You should ensure audiences who are not necessarily well served or who are only served with a particular kind of fare.'*³⁵⁵ BBC 2 and 4, and Radio 3's, content would indicate a combination of a provision of specific genre material coupled with programmes which are broad in content within a classical music context.

Richard Hooper, former Chairman of the (now defunct) Radio Authority and Deputy Chairman of Ofcom agrees with the second of Tim Suter's definitions in his understanding of what PSB means: *'at the BBC, they use licence fee money, i.e. tax payer's money, to do things...at the heart of PSB, I would expect the broadcaster to produce and transmit programming that would not be produced and transmitted if there was just a market place for competition.'* This encapsulates the market failure argument. He supplemented his explanation with the following analogy: *'the example I always give is the Royal Shakespeare Company, which put on Edward III at Stratford. There is no question that Edward III would ever have been seen in a commercial theatre; first of all hardly anyone has heard of it; second it is almost certainly a Shakespeare early work (1992/3); and one of the reasons why they put it on was to try and make people like me, a Shakespeare fanatic, try and decide whether it is written by Shakespeare or not.'*³⁵⁶ This is the market failure argument, that is providing something which would not pay its way in a commercially driven company.

³⁵³ Interview with Tim Suter, formerly at DCMS and Ofcom, and now Ingenious Consulting Network, October 9th 2002, Appendix 67 p.47

³⁵⁴ Ibid. p.47

³⁵⁵ Ibid. p.48

³⁵⁶ Telephone interview with Richard Hooper, formerly Radio Authority and Ofcom, and now Chair of the selection panel for ITV regional news pilot schemes, November 11th 2002

Marc Raboy includes an additional view in the introduction to *Public Broadcasting for the 21st century*: *'Public broadcasting is broadcasting with a purpose: to enhance the quality of public life, empowering individuals and social groups to participate more fully and equitably. Profit-motivated broadcasting is only interested in large audiences. Policy-motivated broadcasting is interested in reaching the largest possible audience the most effectively, in light of the specific objective of the programme concerned.'*³⁵⁷

Defining PSB within the Radio medium is more complicated. The Sunday Times radio columnist, Paul Donovan, is emphatic about publicly funded radio: *'Every day, without exception, I hear, particularly on Radio 4, programmes that make me laugh and cry, that grip and intrigue and force me to find out more, that inform, educate and entertain and are sometimes impossible to turn off. These alone are worth the price of the controversial licence fee.'*³⁵⁸ Breadth of content is what PSB brings to radio, providing people with what they want along with material not provided by commercial networks. These definitions are especially important to Radio 3 and BBC 2 and 4 because they provide a shield to their detractors in their consumption of public funds.

5.6.2 Establishing a Public Service Broadcaster

It is relevant to detail how the BBC was established in order to understand how those with responsibility for classical music in the organisation operate within its structure. PSB did not begin with the BBC. The origin of radio as a broadcaster of speech music can be traced to the end of the First World War when wireless technology used for Morse signals was developed to transmit speech. In May 1922, the Marconi Company arranged talks with wireless set manufacturers and other interested organisations to set up more broadcasting stations around the country under an umbrella organisation called the British Broadcasting Company (BBC).³⁵⁹ The Government granted the BBC a licence in October 1922 to operate on the proviso that what was broadcast should be *'quality programmes consisting of variety entertainment,*

³⁵⁷ Raboy, M. (1995), *Public Broadcasting for the 21st Century*, Luton 1995, John Libby Media/University of Luton, p.13

³⁵⁸ http://www.bbccharterreview.org.uk/pdf_documents/r4_0904.pdf

³⁵⁹ <http://www/mds975/Content/ukradio>

concerts and plays funded by a tax collected from the sale of wireless sets and from a licence fee administered by the Post Office.' The organisation organised the first ever broadcast of a live public event, a recital by the Australian soprano Dame Nellie Melba from the company's Chelmsford works in 1920.³⁶⁰ Two years later a broadcasting centre was established (at Writtle in Chelmsford and Marconi House in London). Strict regulation was enforced by the Post Office, as the licensing authority for broadcasting.³⁶¹

Broadcasting began in November 1922 from London followed by Birmingham and Manchester. By 1925 programmes could be heard throughout the UK. There is an irony here in that the BBC at this time was a commercial organisation and not a purely nationalised institution that it became after 1927 (albeit independent from the Government on editorial content). Through making available wireless programmes throughout the UK, major organisations (including Marconi, General Electric, Radio Communications, Metropolitan Vickers, Western Electric and British Thompson-Houston companies) hoped for an increase in the sale of their radio sets.³⁶² John Reith became, first, the General Manager and subsequently Director General in 1927 after the BBC's original licence expired on 31st December 1926 (and a government committee had recommended that the BBC should be replaced with a public authority). This duly occurred evolving into the British Broadcasting Corporation with a 10 year Royal Charter.³⁶³

The system of the BBC receiving public money remains in place, supported by one of the most recent national reports (The Digital Britain Report, published in June 2009)³⁶⁴ advocating as much. The BBC now comprises eight television networks, ten radio stations and more than fifty local radio and TV stations.³⁶⁵ There are also over forty language worldwide programmes through the BBC World Service. Through the

³⁶⁰ <http://www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/marconi/exhibition/broadcasting.htm>

³⁶¹ <http://postalheritage.wordpress.com/2009/09/29/the-post-office-and-british-broadcasting/>

³⁶² <http://www/mds975/Content/ukradio>

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/chpt5_digitalbritain-finalreport-june09.pdf, Chapter 5, point 12

³⁶⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/info/purpose/what.shtml>

relatively recent introduction of Freeview in 2002³⁶⁶ programmes are accessed digitally as well as online. The programmes cover an enormous range of subject matter, through audio, video containing aural and musical content.

5.6.3 Public Service Broadcasting abroad

Compared to other countries, the UK is fortunate in having the type of broadcasting institution described above. In America, for example, the first use of radio was for navigation and (as in the UK) was used for Morse code.³⁶⁷ This led to commercial activity through the scientific advances of the Marconi Company.³⁶⁸ However, more importantly for this chapter, not-for-profit radio broadcasting was established in the education sector, first by the University of Wisconsin-Madison.³⁶⁹ It was only in 1942, through the Federal Communications Commission, that part of the FM band width was reserved for non-commercial radio broadcasting stations.³⁷⁰ It took the pressure of a major commercial organisation in 1960s, the Ford Foundation, (which had been supporting a number of these stations through its Fund for Adult Education)³⁷¹ to convince national politicians to look at providing public money for a national radio network.³⁷² This resulted in National Public Radio (NPR) and Public Broadcasting System (PBS) being established in 1970.³⁷³ A debate ensued on whether programming should be cultural or more news based (and therefore more populist).

This is on a parallel with the BBC in its quest to provide a balance of both areas in order to fulfil the PSB criteria it is bound by. There are two differences to the UK in this context. First the British Government allows more money to fund the BBC; its equivalent in the USA, NPR, although a non commercial organisation, is funded privately.³⁷⁴ The same applies to PBS television stations.³⁷⁵ Second, because both

³⁶⁶ http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2004/07_july/13/nao.shtml

³⁶⁷ <http://earlyradiohistory.us/section5>

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ <http://www.wsvh.org/pubradiohist.htm>

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ <http://www.fordfound.org/archives/item/0303/text/9>

³⁷² <http://www.fordfound.org/archives/item/0303/text/17>

³⁷³ <http://www.wsvh.org/pubradiohist.htm>

³⁷⁴ <http://www.npr.org/about/index.html?loc=topnav>

³⁷⁵ http://www.pbs.org/aboutpbs/aboutpbs_corp.html

networks are privately funded, there are no criteria laid down by the USA Government to provide a unified sense of purpose to link these stations. Individual stations use their own research to find out what listeners want and adapt their programmes accordingly. These organisations, as is the custom in USA, elicit donations from their listeners too.³⁷⁶

In other countries (outside the UK), the central government funding picture varies. For example, in Finland, the share of spending on culture by the country's government was nearly 60%,³⁷⁷ where as in Germany the 2007 figure was just under 15%.³⁷⁸ In the Netherlands it reached 35% in 2007³⁷⁹ and in Austria it was just over 32% in 2006.³⁸⁰ If one looks at, for example, funding for the regularly subsidised classical music organisations in UK, the projected budget for 2009-2010 is £18,961,740.³⁸¹ Although more than in USA (where classical music organisations receive no guaranteed income from Government), this figure from the Arts Council is small when compared with the total figure the Government is giving the ACE between 2008 and 2011 (£1.6 billion), which equates to 1.18% of the total ACE figure.³⁸²

The scope of definitions I have applied to PSB have credence, and are equally relevant to both television and radio. Although the primary concern of this chapter is to examine the provision and content of classical music programming and how the relevant broadcasters have developed their businesses to take into account the changes over the last 20 years, the means of transmission through radio and television is an equally valid area of debate. Therefore, although PSB has many different interpretations, its main concern is with providing quality programming which aims high in content and listeners, with the (crucial) caveat that a programme or network should not be penalized if listenership figures are consistently low. Radio

³⁷⁶ http://www.pbs.org/aboutpbs/aboutpbs_support.html

³⁷⁷ <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/countries.php?pcid=1160>

³⁷⁸ <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/countries.php?pcid=1190>

³⁷⁹ <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/countries.php?pcid=1340>

³⁸⁰ <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/countries.php?pcid=1040>

³⁸¹ Email from Jennie Somodio, Freedom of Information Officer, 16th November 2009, Appendix 69

³⁸² <http://press.artscouncil.org.uk/content/detail.aspx?NewsAreaID=327&ReleaseID=261>

3 with its heart in classical music programming within BBC fits this scenario. Quality can be defined as a thoroughly well-resourced programme, one that, although costly, commercial networks may not have been able to have afforded to make, and one that offers the listener something worth hearing.

5.7 An evaluation of classical music on BBC Radio

Up until 1992 classical music had an established base predominantly on Radio 3. The BBC Annual Report for 2009 defines the remit of Radio 3 as follows: *'BBC Radio 3 centres on classical music, around which we provide a broad offering of jazz, world music, arts programmes and drama; we also place a strong focus on musical performance from across the UK.'*³⁸³ Before Radio 3 came into existence classical music had broadcasting opportunities on other BBC stations. During the 1940s there were two networks: the Third Programme that consisted of high-level culture containing mixed music and speech; and the Home Service that was a broader based service, but which also included music and speech. The Home Service also broadcast a number of Proms. Some were also broadcast on the Light Programme. This changed in the 1970s with the formation of Radios 3 and 4.

The 2006 Government White Paper recognized the role that Radio 3 contributes to the cultural provision of music to the country. Susannah Simons, Head of Public Affairs and Outreach for BBC Radio comments on this in positive terms: *'we welcomed it [the White Paper] not least because it acknowledged that the role of Radio 3 plays in the broader cultural life of the UK, very specifically in that it acknowledged the role of the performing groups, and it also acknowledged the role that Radio 3 and indeed Radio 4 play in the commissioning of new music and the commissioning of new writing.'*³⁸⁴

³⁸³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/annualreport/exec/performance/radio/radio3.shtml>

³⁸⁴ Interview with Susannah Simons, formerly Director of Communications Classic FM and now Head of Public Affairs & Outreach, BBC Radio & Music, 3rd April 2006, Appendix 67, p.41

5.7.1 Radio 3 content

The BBC (through Radio 3 and to a lesser its television counterparts) provides a wide range of classical music content. The station has a regular audience of approximately two million listeners each year³⁸⁵ and, as the Radio 3 website (www.bbc.co.uk/radio3) clearly shows, the programmes are varied. Examples include Composers of the Week, live concerts of both its house and commercially independent orchestras and choirs, interviews with musicians and studies of specific composers and genres.

It is worth commenting on the amount of live broadcasts which feature on the network. These broadcasts were called into question following Roger Wright's overhaul of the Radio 3 schedule in March 2007; this was the most radical since 2002. The changes included both new presenters at different times of the day, and also more complete recitals and opera performances during the daytime. But the most significant change was the amount of music broadcast 'live'. Under the terms of the station's service licence, the station is required to ensure that half of its annual music output consists of live or specially recorded material. The station's total live and specially recorded music output remains over 50%. Some programmes will now be transmitted the following day, after the live performance.³⁸⁶ This means that the presenter of the relevant programme now broadcasts from the studio rather than the concert venues. Curiously this actually makes the network similar to Classic FM in that the latter, in the main, broadcasts concerts consisting of CD recordings rather than live performances. It is a dangerous precedent (for Radio 3) because it shifts one of the station's unique selling points, that of broadcasting a concert as it happens, and also broadcasting the house orchestras and choir which the network finances.

Roger Wright defines his mission for Radio 3 as the following: *'BBC Radio 3 is the only station to provide so many broadcasts of recitals, concerts and operas, making up over half of our musical output.'*³⁸⁷ The format is aligned to Johnson's definition: *'Radio 3's traditional approach implies that the understanding of a musical work is enhanced by*

³⁸⁵ http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2009/05_may/07/rajar.shtml

³⁸⁶ http://www.musicweb-international.com/classRev/2007/Mar07/Roger_Wright.htm

³⁸⁷ http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2008/09_september/01/radio3.shtml

knowledge about it'.³⁸⁸ This provides an explanation as to why the presenters are musically knowledgeable themselves and are also supported by an experienced team of editors and researchers, and on the technical side by engineers. The station also includes air-time for amateur performers. One instance was a broadcast on 1st October 2008 of four of the UK's top amateur orchestras (the Dundee Symphony Orchestra, the Slaithwaite Philharmonic, Birmingham Contemporary Winds and the Kensington Chamber Orchestra). Further performances by amateur musicians were broadcast on two of the network's programmes: *Breakfast Show* and *Performance on 3*.³⁸⁹ A new project, again aimed at non-professional musicians, was also launched in October 2008. Five all day piano events (Pianothons) were staged in five major UK cities (Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow, Manchester and London). A selection of the performers were then broadcast Radio 3's *Breakfast Show* and *Performance on 3*. This is just a small proportion of what is available but it is a clear example of the variety and scope of the station.

5.7.2 Breadth of programming on Radio 3

Roger Wright, the Controller of BBC Radio 3, comments that the overall picture of all the BBC Radio stations have to be looked at in order to be able to critically appraise the provision. BBC Radio provides '*an overall portfolio that provides something for every licence fee payer*'.³⁹⁰ Interestingly, one of the ways that the breadth of programming is acquired is not only from the internal resources of the BBC (through the allocation of the licence fee), but also from outside commissions. Wright views his station's provision of classical music as something that needs to be provided and not a definition of market failure (an argument presented earlier by Tim Suter to define PSB, see page 150). This implies that because no other organisation can afford to provide the scope of programming, then his network ought to: '*I recognise that it is terribly easy to say we do all these things that nobody else does and that is why we are important. I don't believe in market failure. It is too easy to justify us on the basis that nobody*

³⁸⁸ Johnson, J. (2002), *Who Needs Classical Music?*, Oxford 2002, OUP, p.75

³⁸⁹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/classical/play-to-the-nation>

³⁹⁰ Telephone conversation with Roger Wright, Controller of Radio 3, October 8th, 2002

*else does it' and believes Radio 3's role to be: 'part of an overall music and radio portfolio within the BBC and at the heart of public service.'*³⁹¹

BBC Radio 3's principal aim is to ensure that the public money it receives is spent in the most proficient way possible, in order to provide sufficient provision of classical music to the UK. The Government's 2006 White Paper indicated that it does. A publicly funded classical music station is able to function even if it has high operating costs and delivers to low audience figures (in comparison with its sister BBC stations and other competitors). For all subject areas of broadcast, such as music and the arts, programmes of this nature can be placed either on a separate channel (such as BBC4) which are paid for by the individual, or kept within the overall mix of terrestrial programming on the mainstream BBC channels; this makes it available to all (regardless of listenership figures). The latter system has much to recommend it, and the White Paper would confirm that stance. Interestingly Darren Henley, Manager Director of Classic FM and The Jazz also concurs with this: *'I think Radio 3 does a very good job of what they do...it's great at what it does and we do a very different job. In fact we cohabit quite nicely next to each other. And in fact a healthy Classic FM and a healthy Radio 3 is healthy for classical music.'*³⁹²

5.7.3 Distinctiveness of Radio 3's content

What makes Radio 3 distinctive is its concentration (through the public money that enables it to do so) on live broadcasts. Its purpose is to serve the general public with a complexity of needs and this, in the cultural field, is one. Susannah Simons at the BBC comments: *'What I don't think is clear enough is Radio 3's role as a cultural channel. Radio 3 has always been ever since its inception as the Third Programme a cultural channel rather than just a classical music channel but that tends to get over looked.'*³⁹³ There is a role here for educating and influencing people and BBC clearly sees itself having one. Radio 3 is seen as a place of reliability and trust. Graham Dixon, Managing Editor of the station states: *'Trust is at the heart of the BBC- one of its fundamental values...trust*

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Interview with Darren Henley, Managing Director Classic FM, Appendix 67, p.9

⁷⁷ Ibid., interview with Susannah Simons, Appendix 67, p.43

*means that where we are speaking with one voice that is trustworthy, but also approachable, engaging, qualities we would like to see in our friends-building that relationship of trust and curiosity with the audience in such a way that they will come with us on a journey.'*³⁹⁴

In 2009 the prestigious Sony Radio Awards announced that Radio 3 had won the UK Station of the year prize, the first time the network had achieved this. This implies that the station is operating in a successful manner and producing programmes worthy of a station funded by public money.³⁹⁵ This is an instance where the quality of the work broadcast by Radio 3 is acknowledged regardless of the numbers of listeners it reaches and whether that is important both economically and artistically. Gillian Reynolds, radio critic for The Daily Telegraph thinks it does: *'Without the BBC there would be fewer orchestras, far less direct stimulation of audiences or service to them. The amount of money spent, via the licence fee, on music is of massive benefit..the use of the licence fee income to fund orchestras and choirs is in the national interest.'*³⁹⁶

Employment is an additional and powerful argument for Radio 3's use of licence fee income in being able to provide a national provision of classical music. This is discussed a later in this chapter.

5.7.4 Use of new technology on the network

Developments in technology and their influence on classical music organisations, especially artists and record companies, were examined in Chapter 4. The Broadcasting sector has equally adapted its business models to accommodate advances in this field.

One of the most significant models of programming on Radio 3 is its periodic analyses of specific composers. In May 2008 the network broadcast the entire output of Chopin's music.³⁹⁷ Previous years had seen similar treatment, first with the

³⁹⁴ Interview with Graham Dixon, Managing Editor Radio 3, 4th March 2006, Appendix 67, p.7

³⁹⁵ <http://www.radioawards.org/news>

³⁹⁶ Email from Gillian Reynolds, radio critic for the Daily Telegraph, 19th July 2006, Appendix 70

³⁹⁷ Fawkes, R. (2008), 'Chopin spree', *Classical Music Magazine*, London, Rhinegold Publishing Ltd., 10th May 2008, p.37

complete Beethoven symphonies (in June 2005), then the broadcast of the complete works of Bach (December 2005), and subsequently Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky (February 2007).³⁹⁸ The Beethoven transmissions were enabled for downloading at each live performance of the symphonies. The station also provided live surtitles through Digital Audio Broadcasts text (available through digital radios) when it broadcast Wagner's *Ring*.³⁹⁹ The exploitation of technology along with the radio station's website was extended in September 2008 when Radio 3 used its website to show specially shot concert videos of twelve concerts performed by BBC organisations and included in the footage was documentary material on how the event was put together for the performance.⁴⁰⁰ This encapsulates the ability of the broadcaster in being able to transmit such a fascinating experiment. No commercial network could have achieved a similar feat unless it had a commercial sponsor willing to provide such extensive funds.

Radio 3 also employed new technology to its advantage by streaming English National Opera's production of *Carmen*, the first time an opera had been streamed in the UK by a British broadcaster. This in-depth project allows not only the complete catalogue of the composer's works to be aired, but also provides an opportunity for an examination of the musician's life and influences on his work. This type of programming is easier to broadcast on a publicly funded station because listenership figures are not crucial to its survival. Again, a commercially funded radio station would have found it difficult to attract sufficient funding through sponsors and advertisers to be able to afford to clear a whole weekend of programmes in order to broadcast the same event.

A further area which is important to reflect on is listening via a mobile phone. This had reached 12.3% of people over the age of 15 tuning into the radio on their phone, with the proportion rising to 31.1% among 15-24s, up 39% year-on-year.⁴⁰¹ These

³⁹⁸ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/tchaikovskyexperience/pip/j1tpy/>

³⁹⁹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/operaon3/rheingold.shtml>

⁴⁰⁰ http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2008/09_september/12/radio3.shtml

⁴⁰¹ <http://www.digitalspy.co.uk/broadcasting/news/a144944/slight-rise-in-dab-radio-listening-share.html>

figures rose further towards the end of 2009 with a general listening figure of 13.5%; within the 15-24 age bracket, the percentage had risen to 32.7%, suggesting a continuing trend.⁴⁰² However this is a generic figure for listening to all music genres because the data is not subdivided into different musical styles. Classical music is a genre of music which perhaps has more of an identity with quality of sound than other genres (see Chapter 4, page 117). If the listening figures for classical music on mobile phones were extrapolated, then it is unlikely the figures would be high because of the low quality of sound that phones can manage via a download.

Quality of sound is also a factor on Radio 3. 24 hour streaming of Radio 5 Sports Extra led to the lowering of the bit rate of the station from 192 kbps to 160 kbps.⁴⁰³ The decision was subsequently reversed in October 2008 and returned the rate to 192kbps, but even though this was the same level as before the change, some still view the FM frequency as providing better sound quality.⁴⁰⁴ The same article also states that the bit rate for Radios 1, 2, 6 Music and 1Extra are at the lower rate of 128kbps, thus Radio 3 appears to have preferential treatment. For classical music consumers, this can only be regarded as positive even if the German public service broadcaster ARD transmits its 55 stereo radio stations on digital satellite at the significantly higher rate of 320 kbps.⁴⁰⁵

5.8 The cost of Radio 3

There is merit in analysing the cost of running the Radio 3 network because it explains the reasoning behind the classical music content that the network broadcasts. The BBC as a whole makes an overall contribution to the UK economy of £1 billion through the commissioning and creating of programmes from independent companies and collaborating with other creative partners.⁴⁰⁶ It is part of £588 million

⁴⁰² <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2009/nov/02/latest-rajars-radio-listener-figures>

⁴⁰³ <http://www.digitalradiotech.co.uk/articles/BBC-Radio-3s-bit-rate-reduced-to-160-kbps-on-DAB.php>

⁴⁰⁴ <http://www.digitalradiotech.co.uk/articles/BBC-has-increased-Radio-3-back-to-192-kbps.php>

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/annualreport/exec/performance/radio/index.shtml>

that the BBC spends on radio as the chart below (figure 2) indicates.⁴⁰⁷ This equates to 17% of the proportion of the monthly licence fee being that is spent on all BBC radio (television in contrast accounts for 69%).⁴⁰⁸

Breakdown of BBC spend

	£m
Television	2,336
Radio	588
Online	177
Other	295
Total	3,396

Figure 2

The high cost of running the network is underlined in figure 3 below (extrapolated from page 21 in the notes to the summary Financial Statement within the 2008/09 BBC Annual Report and Accounts).⁴⁰⁹ £51.1 million for Radio 3 as a total spend is higher than Radio 1 (with a reach of 21.3%) and Radio 2 (with a reach of 26.1%). In fact it is nearer in monetary terms to the cost of the BBC News Channel.

UK public services

	Content Distribution		Infrastructure/ Other support items		2009 Total	2008 Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
BBC One	1,142.0	47.9	202.9	-1,392.8	1,418.2	

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/annualreport/pdf/bbc_executive_08_09.pdf

BBC Two	450.6	34.1	85.0	-	569.7	567.9
BBC Three	87.3	4.2	23.1	-	114.6	125.2
BBC Four	54.8	3.0	13.6	-	71.4	64.8
CBBC	35.8	3.4	10.8	-	50.0	48.7
CBeebies	16.3	3.5	5.7	-	25.5	23.3
BBC HD	2.1	2.7	1.9	-	6.7	6.7
BBC Alba	3.0	0.8	0.6	-	4.4	-
BBC News channel	47.9	6.6	6.5	-	61.0	58.0
BBC Parliament	2.8	5.1	1.7	-	9.6	5.8
BBC Red Button	13.5	12.3	4.3	-	30.1	36.7
Television	1,856.1	123.6	356.1	-	2,335.8	2,355.3
BBC Radio 1	33.1	3.5	6.4	-	43.0	43.1
BBC Radio 2	40.1	3.8	6.8	-	50.7	51.3
BBC Radio 3	40.0	4.1	7.0	-	51.1	49.4
BBC Radio 4	85.9	8.3	14.4	-	108.6	105.5
BBC Radio 5 Live	56.5	5.7	10.0	-	72.2	72.3
BBC Radio 5 Live Sports Extra	2.6	0.3	0.8	-	3.7	3.3
BBC 1Xtra	6.8	0.5	2.3	-	9.6	9.3
BBC 6 Music	6.5	0.4	2.1	-	9.0	7.5
BBC 7	5.2	0.4	1.3		6.9	7.3

Orchestras and performing groups 21.5 - 3.6 - **25.1** 19.3

Added above is the cost of the orchestras and performing groups, which raises the running costs of Radio 3 considerably.

Figure 3

This is symptomatic of the dilemma that the station has because, although it has small listenership figures, the organisation is also an employer, employing five BBC orchestras, and the BBC Singers (the UK's only full-time professional choir).⁴¹⁰ On a separate but related point, the cost of the Proms is high at £8.7 million (2009 figures), approximately a fifth of the Radio 3 budget, but as the Controller Roger Wright points out, there is an expected return of around £3.3 million.⁴¹¹

Radio 3 argues that it commissions at least 30 new works each year and this figure has remained consistent.⁴¹² As stated, it manages six live performance groups, broadcasts for 24 hours and is also an employer of staff, performers and composers. It is worth considering the impact of employment that Radio 3 makes to the music business and through it the range of programmes it can transmit because of that funding. The areas that BBC programmes cover are broader than its commercial counterparts, because of the merits of its funding set-up. A useful example is cited in Chapter 3 of the BBC Symphony Orchestra's (BBCSO) annual January weekends at the Barbican (see Chapter 3, page 69). The orchestra investigates in depth the music, life and influence on the music of a particular composer. The BBCSO is the flagship orchestra on the BBC roster. The other BBC performing groups, the BBC Singers, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and BBC National Orchestra of Wales, all have similar ventures although less comprehensive than this particular model. Commercial orchestras have found this large-scale type of project impossible to programme because there are not enough sponsors interested in paying for the high costs of such an undertaking. The new commissions provide employment for composers, publishers and opportunity for amateur singers in the choirs it engages. Furthermore the station organises special events throughout the year.

As well as World music, literary and jazz programmes, the main classical events that are covered by the network include the Royal Philharmonic Society Awards in May,

⁴¹⁰ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/annualreport/exec/performance/radio/radio3.shtml>

⁴¹¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/proms/2008/interactandreviews/questions.shtml>

⁴¹² Email from Victoria Bevan, Head of Communications BBC Radio 3 and Classical Music Television, 14th December 2009, Appendix 71

the British Composers Awards in December, the Promenade (Proms) concerts between mid July and early September, and the final of the Choir of the year in November. In my view, the services that Radio 3 provides do offer a breadth that is unequalled anywhere in the world, and more than justify its use of the income from the licence fee. Therefore the material the station broadcasts is one of breadth, managed through its £51.1 million budget. The management of its business has not varied greatly since 1989, with the most significant change occurring in online activity.

5.9 The Proms and its broadcasting strengths

The highest profile of the BBC providing exposure to classical music is through the Proms concerts. It is worth critically reviewing these events to explain their significance. The regular summer series of concerts at the Royal Albert Hall allows for the opportunity for not only the BBC performing groups and the UK independent orchestras and choirs, but also for musicians from all around the world. For example, in 2009 there were 100 concerts, including 76 held at the Royal Albert Hall. In addition there were 19 chamber music concerts at Cadogan Hall along with talks, workshops, films and free activities.⁴¹³ Profile was also extended to living composers in the form of BBC commissions that were then premiered at the Proms. The 2009 season premiered 15 new works, in addition to 12 BBC commissions.⁴¹⁴ This is an impressive range of musical provision.

The former Proms Director, Nicholas Kenyon, views the BBC Promenade concerts as: *'the way into classical music for so many people...highlighting the many different styles of performance-modern instruments, period instruments.'*⁴¹⁵ As page 142 states, each concert is broadcast live and streamed online, with a selection on television.

⁴¹³ http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2008/09_september/12/proms.shtml

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ Clarke, K. (2006), News section, *Classical Music Magazine*, London, Rhinegold Publishing Ltd, 8th July 2006, p.18

The number of people listening to the Prom concerts through different forms of media indicates that this festival of classical music offers comprehensive provision to the consumer. On BBC Television the recorded reached was over 12 million viewers for the 2009 season (excluding the Last Night of The Proms and time-shifted viewing, such as via the BBC iPlayer). Furthermore, for the first time a number of the Proms concerts that were televised by BBC Two and BBC Four were available on demand for seven days via the BBC iPlayer and, as with the 2008 festival, the regular Proms broadcasts on BBC Two were also shown on BBC HD.⁴¹⁶ The figures for attending the concerts are high with, in 2008, a 90% average attendance rate for the main evening Proms (at the Royal Albert Hall).⁴¹⁷ 2009's figures were equally impressive with an average attendance of 87% in a series which included 12 more concerts (so an even higher achievement).⁴¹⁸ This gives a clear indication of the success of these concerts in terms of reaching the public. Therefore the televising of some of the concerts at least offers a further chance to expand the accessibility of classical music and build on a successful format in the business. The format for the concerts is in the main traditional. There has been no lowering of standards or radical change of format to the structure of the concert.

For the Proms, the BBC has adapted its business model to incorporate technical advances in online transmission. The developments include the ability to read programme notes on the television whilst the concert is underway (by pressing the red button on the television set's remote control). In the 2009 season, this was modified and for five of the concerts, a single camera allowed the viewer to watch the conductor accompanied by a commentary on the repertoire being performed.⁴¹⁹ The Last Night provides the possibility of either watching the concert in the Royal Albert Hall live or one of the Proms in the Park taking place around the country.⁴²⁰

The range of music, the unique approach the Proms offers to the attendees (more relaxed style and 'promming') and outside broadcasts are three facets which offer a

⁴¹⁶ http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2008/09_september/12/proms.shtml

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2009/09_september/11/proms.shtml

⁴¹⁹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/proms/2009/broadcasts/interactive>

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

major opportunity for classical music to be accessed worldwide, aurally and visually, in much the same way that all the Three Tenors events have done.

The current Proms Controller, Roger Wright, comments: *'The BBC's commitment to the Proms remains vital and it is heartening to see again the strong appreciation of Proms audiences, not least in their curiosity for new and unfamiliar music. We are delighted that in offering excellence, a value-for-money experience and a broad programme, we are succeeding in reaching new and young audiences.'*⁴²¹ The Prom concerts are a paradigm of portraying the medium of classical music to traditional and non-traditional classical music audiences. The weight of the television broadcasts, the complete broadcasts on Radio 3, the newspaper reviews and the programmes associated with these concerts ensure the profile of classical music is noticeably raised.

5.10 Broadening the scope of classical music listenership

The Proms offer important overall access to classical music. Aside from the genre's traditional market, classical music can have a perception of elitism. The sector is supported by classical music specialists (as perhaps the small listenership figures on Radio 3 indicate) and mainly for adults, as indicated by Richard Morrison in *The Times* in 2002: *'I find myself looking round concert halls (even during performances which I am greatly enjoying), noting the absence of almost anyone under 25, and thinking: "Why the hell aren't they here?"'*⁴²² Reaching a wider group was what the *Four Seasons* and *Three Tenors* campaigns had the intention of making an impression on. This is also very much in Stephen Maddock's sights, Chief Executive of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO); he says something similar in connection with making classical music more prominent: *'Part of it is to do with general public awareness. In all sorts of ways how you market, how you promote the orchestra, how much (involvement) with mass media.'*⁴²³ Russell Jones, former Director of the Association of British Orchestras (ABO), cites marketing as part of what classical music requires: *'(there are) more orchestras than ever, more concerts than ever, but getting the product to the more venues and*

⁴²¹ Ibid.

⁴²² http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/article806537.ece

⁴²³ Interview with Stephen Maddock, over the telephone, Chief Executive CBSO, 15th May 2009, Appendix 67, p.30

*individuals than ever; we don't market that enough and we don't get enough credit for that.'*⁴²⁴ This theme of how the classical business is marketing itself, and in particular, how marketing techniques have changed since 1990 was explored in Chapter 3. The point Jones and Maddock are making is that breadth of classical music activity is essential to keep existing consumers and attract new ones. Adapting business models to achieve this is imperative.

The BBC is generally regarded as a positive force for the music business because it is a serious provider and enabler of classical music. Graham Sheffield, former Artistic Director of the Barbican, comments that the BBC as a contributor and commissioner is the main provider followed by ACE. His view is that public money is important because *'it needs the core of the musicians to provide the music service it does at an affordable cost.'*⁴²⁵ Without the musicians the BBC employs, the extent of the classical music services the organisation is able to provide would not be possible. This is supported by the Musicians Union, which states in its response to the Digital Britain consultation: *'the BBC is the biggest single employer of the MU members in the UK and is in a unique position of supporting full-time orchestras and the BBC Singers.'*⁴²⁶

5.11 Classic FM Radio

As mentioned earlier, along with the BBC, the other network that broadcasts significant amounts of classical music in the UK is Classic FM. The station is much younger than Radio 3 (began broadcasting in 1992), but it has quickly established itself as a key provider for both existing classical music lovers and, more importantly, to a new audience for this genre. In a short period of time, the country's provision of classical music has increased significantly. Figures from Rajar have confirmed the station's position as the UK's largest commercial radio station with 5.5 million listeners, and its share of the national market reaching 3.7%.⁴²⁷ Darren Henley can rightly comment: *'more people get their classical music through Classic FM than any*

⁴²⁴ Interview with Russell Jones, former Director ABO, 26th August 2006, Appendix 67, p.14

⁴²⁵ Telephone conversation with Gaham Sheffield, 18th August 2004

⁴²⁶ [w.musiciansunion.org.uk/site/cms/v4_newsArticleView.asp?article=893](http://www.musiciansunion.org.uk/site/cms/v4_newsArticleView.asp?article=893), Appendix

⁴²⁷ http://www.rajar.co.uk/listening/quarterly_listening.php

*other single source in UK.*⁴²⁸ This is evidence that this network is a key provider of classical music. To quote Johnson again '*Classic FM's approach implies that great music speaks directly and immediately...as Classic FM's playlist reveals, it is tied up with classical music functioning as popular music.*'⁴²⁹ This means that the station works on the principle of short works punctuated by adverts and competitions (as occurs on pop stations). The expectation for the listener is to be lightly entertained, not having to be knowledgeable about the music being aired.

Research for Classic FM in its early years showed that its main competitors were, curiously, not Radio 3, but Radios 2 and 4, especially the latter. Ruth Duncan provided a series of comments on research she had undertaken for Classic FM (Appendix 65) which show that the two BBC radio stations that Classic FM listeners use are Radios 2 and 4. Some fascinating facts emerged from this research undertaken at the outset of Classic FM's broadcast life: on a yearly average, 41% of Classic FM listeners also listen to Radio 2 and 45% listen to Radio 4. This indicates clearly that Radio 4 is the next choice for Classic FM listeners, followed by Radio 2. Also, the station claims that 49% of Radio 3 listeners also tune to Classic FM but only 15% the other way. This is a figure worth considering. It shows the scope that Classic FM has attained in taking a wide variety of listeners with station, not exclusively but still a significant in-road into BBC Radio audience figures. What this really shows is that Radio 3's policy of being a broader cultural station rather than a purely classical music station has kept its listenership figures static. Its approach to the material it transmits is very different from that of Classic FM and the listenership figures support this.

Classic FM also views itself as having a cultural role in the UK. The former Managing Director of Classic FM (and now Group Chief Executive of the Millennium Stadium, Cardiff) Roger Lewis, is bullish about the role Classic FM plays in education, and also in being perceived as a cultural station: '*Classic FM is part of the culture of the UK. In [sic] the classical music culture of the UK and [sic] Classic FM is a major player. It has*

⁴²⁸ Ibid., Darren Henley interview, 24th April 2003, Appendix 67, p.12

⁴²⁹ Johnson, J. (2002), *Who Needs Classical Music?*, Oxford 2002, OUP, p. 75

done what the BBC should have done 15/20 years ago. It has opened doors for a mass audience in the UK. It has been truly inclusive, it has educated, it has entertained, it has informed...the Reithian troika at the heart of the BBC, and it has done that for classical music and that is extraordinary.'⁴³⁰ Lewis' terminology is deliberately ironic because these words were the mantra of the BBC's first Director General, Lord Reith.

5.11.1 Commercial ventures

From a business perspective, what Classic FM is able to do is work with other commercial organisations to highlight classical music and offer more variety and therefore more provision for this genre. The strength of Classic FM is its ability to elevate the profile of classical music which is good in commercial terms, but also for performing musicians and composers too. RAJAR figures have shown that Classic FM's reach had risen to 5.445 million listeners (figures up to March 2010).⁴³¹

One example is the station's launch in 2006 of a record label aimed at discovering the stars of the future.⁴³² Entitled *Classic FM Presents*, it joined forces with Sony BMG (now Sony Music), the company that currently produces Classic FM's compilation CDs. One of them, *Classic FM At The Movies*, is an illustration of the station building on a successful radio programme and capitalising on its success. *Classic FM At The Movies* was a two hour Saturday evening show hosted by a household name presenter (former Radio 1 disc jockey Simon Bates) concentrating, as the programme title implies, on film soundtracks.

Classic FM offers pop DJ style presentation, single movements of works, artist interviews, partnerships with commercial orchestras, movie music as well as classical, full works in an evening concert format on CDs, and marketing monthly events such as Holland Park, Mostly Mozart Festival at the Barbican and Bolshoi Opera and Ballet and Glastonbury Abbey where the station features the event on its programmes and website and offers ticket discounts.

⁴³⁰ Interview with Roger Lewis, former Managing Director of Classic FM, EMI Classics and Decca International, and now Group Chief Executive of the Welsh Rugby Union and The Millennium Stadium, Appendix 67, p.25

⁴³¹ http://www.rajar.co.uk/listening/quarterly_listening.php

⁴³² <http://www.brandrepublic.com/news/568891/classic-fm-extends-brand-new-record-label/>

Recent figures for popular programmes such as Classic FM at the Movies have shown an increase in the station's listening figures to 88,000 in that particular year.⁴³³ With both these types of commercial ventures, compilation CDs based on a highly successful and popular radio programmes and the new record label, the station uses its influence as a brand to depict the differing areas of classical music in different formats to the general public. The station highlights music on the airwaves and its television station, whilst the record company provides the recording expertise and, more vital, its national distribution system for the album. This way the recordings have a good chance of being accessible nationwide and are giving new classical artists a chance in the business.

Another example is the Hear Here! project the station embarked on in January 2008 in conjunction with the Royal Philharmonic Society and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. The idea is that listeners can explore different ways of listening to music, in the concert hall and to learn more about the music they have been or are about to listen to.⁴³⁴ Hear Here! examines a different aspect of listening via a website which is updated monthly. Contributions from performers along with a range of articles and blogs with leading musicians, scientists, writers and thinkers.⁴³⁵ This is an initiative which combines a broadcaster with two well-respected cultural organisations.

5.12 Breadth of content

Both Radio 3 and Classic FM are broadening their reach by providing the ability to listen to their programmes on portable devices. Since February 2008 when Radio 3 enabled three of its programmes for downloading: *Composer of the Week*, *Building a Library* (from the *CD Review* programme) and *World Roots*, the broadcaster regularly makes its programmes available for podcasting. The station also has a presence on social network sites Twitter, Youtube and Flickr. The programmes for podcasting are

⁴³³ Classic FM press release 'The Stars Shine For Classic FM', 3rd August 2006, Appendix 73

⁴³⁴ <http://www.hearhere.org.uk/>

⁴³⁵ <http://www.royalphilharmonicsociety.org.uk/?page=hearhere/index.html>

edited versions available for seven days after the first broadcast. This complements programmes through its website (again for a seven day limit).⁴³⁶ This broadens accessibility to the genre and uses the current available technology in the market place to good effect.

Classic FM provides a similar initiative through the presenter Bob Jones's *Arts Daily* and Anne-Marie Minhall's *The Guest List*. Interviews and features on arts projects from around the world are placed each day on the Classic FM website, available for download. Analysing the station's range of interviews under this section of its website is impressive; those interviewed include Lord Richard Attenborough, Sir Michael Caine, Daniel Craig and Ewan McGregor; and from the music field Nigel Kennedy, Lang Lang, Bryn Terfel and Rolando Villazon⁴³⁷ As with Radio 3, programmes are available on line, can be podcasted, through satellite tv and also on demand (for up to seven days). The website also allows the listener to research previous playlists and to receive background information on specific pieces chosen by the listener. Programmes can also be accessed on an iPhone.⁴³⁸

Classic FM also broadcasts programmes with an educative role. Using Alex James, the bassist for the pop group Blur, the station broadcasts every Sunday a guide to the history of classical music. The programme is called *The A-Z of Classical Music* and has a two year duration.⁴³⁹ The use of a pop artist to attract a younger audience and produce a programme from which people can learn more about classical music is an overtly populist move but the station clearly considers it will be successful because of its commitment to the programme for two years and the fact that it will run to over 200 hours of broadcasting over that time scale.⁴⁴⁰ In fact one of the most successful programmes is the morning show hosted by Simon Bates. The network attracts a host of show business stars on its chat show programme *The Guest List*

⁴³⁶ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/podcasts>

⁴³⁷ <http://www.classicfm.co.uk/on-air/programmes/guest-list/>

⁴³⁸ <http://www.classicfm.co.uk/on-air/ways-of-listening/>

⁴³⁹ Email from Charlotte Rosier, Head of Media Relations & Marketing Classic FM, 13th February 2008, Appendix 74

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

which has included actors Nicole Kidman, Christian later, Daniel Craig and author Ian Rankin.⁴⁴¹

5.13 Digital broadcasting

Although both stations can be listened to online, both Radio 3 and Classic FM have broadened their service online. Classic FM launched seven new interactive channels, six online radio streams and a new online television channel in January 2008. Accessed through MyclassicFM.co.uk, listeners are able to personalise their playlists by rating tracks and composers. The television station focuses on classical music videos 24 hours a day, seven days a week.⁴⁴² This is a marketing venture, one which uses televisual output to attract music companies to work with the station. Similarly Radio 3 has widened its online broadcasting by filming 12 concerts given by the BBC's house ensembles which are then transmitted on Radio 3.⁴⁴³ These are examples of organisations using technology for encouraging audience listenership through an expansion of traditional methods of working.

5.13.1 Internet Radio

Research carried out in 2008 by Rajar found that Internet radio has fully established itself in a market with more media to access music than in the past (such as television, digital radio, portable players), and the sector is growing. A brief resumé of the outcome of Rajar's third report is set out below and it is constructive to see the increase in internet radio usage and general internet downloading habits across the three reports that Rajar has produced. The conclusions of the third report show that one in three people in the UK (16.1 million people) listen to the radio over the internet,⁴⁴⁴ a significant rise from June 2008 (when the first Rajar survey on Internet radio listening was carried out). In fact since Rajar's May 2008 report, this is a rise of two million.⁴⁴⁵ The survey doesn't make clear whether the results show that one in

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴⁴² Email from Charlotte Rosier, Head of Media Relations & Marketing Classic FM, 12th December 2007, Appendix 75

⁴⁴³ http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2008/09_september/12/radio3.shtml

⁴⁴⁴ http://www.rajar.co.uk/docs/news/MIDAS3_report.pdf

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

three people sometimes or ever listen to radio via the internet, or whether one third of all radio listening takes place over the internet. If one compares the listening habits of other countries it is likely to be the former, that is one third of all those surveyed sometimes listen to radio on the internet. The results also state that over 7 million people have downloaded a podcast and that nearly 32% of the population have listened to the radio via the internet; With a finding of 13.5 million using the 'Listening Again' service, this report highlights the survival of radio in a digital age, one which shows the medium's adaptability to changes in the way it conducts its business. It mirrors, as this thesis will show, the adaptability of the classical music business.⁴⁴⁶ Rajar has published a chart for all radio listening via platform between the fourth quarter of 2009 and early February 2010. The results have shown (as stated on page 147) that digital radio accounts for nearly 21% of all radio listening, a slight dip in figures from September 2009 but a rise year on year. This confirms how strong a medium radio is in the digital sector, although these are general statistics and the style of music listened to is not identified.⁴⁴⁷ The Rajar reports suggest that radio is a strong medium and one which can still attract significant numbers of listeners despite the abundance of free and paid-for television channels.

5.13.2 Classicalwebcast.com

Classicalwebcast.com illustrates a chart of the available classical music stations around the world that can be accessed online. These 159 networks are accessed free, are a mixture of public radio, commercially driven radio and university-campus based radio and are listened to online. This demonstrates clearly that there is a market for classical music around the world, that people do listen to it online (otherwise there wouldn't be the range on offer) and that the range of music within this genre played is wide. Because these stations can be accessed online, anyone around the world can listen to their programmes; it is not limited to the radio frequency within a specific country.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ http://www.rajar.co.uk/docs/2009_12/2009_Q4_Listening_via_platform.pdf

5.14 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the Broadcasting area of the music business, and in particular the influence and business models that Classic FM and Radio 3 follow in order to provide classical music. These organisations have wholeheartedly moved from traditional music programmes solely available through an analogue radio set to the streaming of programmes over the internet, linked television programmes and by engaging the listener through web based activities (such as message boards, encouraging feed-back, background information on presenters, programmes and the 'Listen Again' facility).

One other example of radio connecting with other music businesses comes from the record company Naxos, which has signed a business deal with the USA based Chicago radio station WFMT. Called the WFMT Radio Network Recordings, this classical music based radio station will release on CD some of its broadcasts, distributed through Naxos.⁴⁴⁸ This expands the recording arm of the station, launched in 2005. The idea was then to launch *'its own in-house recording label called CSO Resound, which will release CDs and downloads on iTunes and the CSO's website.'*⁴⁴⁹ The Naxos deal allows a worldwide recording label to introduce these recordings to a bigger market. This is another way of broadening the outreach of classical music and exploring other routes for consumers to receive classical music.

With such breadth on offer, there is much to commend the provision and accessibility of classical music in the UK, particularly on radio. This is because Radio 3 and Classic FM offer content for both those who want to know more about this genre of music and for those who do not want a learned style of programme. When Radio 3 won the 2009 UK Station of the Year Sony Award, the judges' citation stated that the station had: *'sustained a particularly strong schedule of appealing breadth with a subtle combination of challenging and accessible material that is presented in a thoroughly*

⁴⁴⁸ Fawkes, R. (2008), 'Naxos strikes deal for radio documentaries', *Classical Music Magazine*, London, Rhinegold Publishing Ltd., 2nd August 2008, p.6

⁴⁴⁹ <http://www.timeout.com/chicago/articles/opera-classical/18210/sound-decision>

*entertaining manner.*⁴⁵⁰ The runners-up were Radio 1 and Classic FM, the latter receiving the following commendation: *Classic FM continues to offer a particularly strong brand, covering the fullest spectrum of activities without losing sight of the programme service lying at its heart.*⁴⁵¹ This provision is geared to providing opportunities for listeners to listen to classical music; the choice is not just about repertoire and different ways of accessing the music, but through listen again initiatives the user can choose when as well as how to listen. And whilst television coverage of classical music has increased through Classic FM's online television channel and BBC 4, and not withstanding some output on the non-BBC terrestrial channels (identified earlier), content on this medium is significantly less than that of radio. From a business perspective, the future of listening to classical music broadcasts is unclear. If more people prefer to listen to streamed events and or download music onto their own players (computers or portable devices), in effect choosing the time they wish to listen to that particular music, then the likelihood will be less listening to concerts in a conventional manner so far adhered to. In this respect the business model offered by Classic FM seems the one to be most applicable for the future of classical music broadcasting. Equally essential to classical music genre is that the BBC continues, as a music provider, not only to broadcast specific programmes for classical music specialists, but also as an employer. Radio 3 has adapted its style to take advantage of technical advances to good effect through its public service remit. The classical music industry has two models on which to draw.

⁴⁵⁰ <http://www.radioawards.org.winners/?awid=183&awname=UH+Station+Of+The+Year&yer=2009>

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.