

JOSEPH HOROWITZ

Biography

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.

Mr. Horowitz's first seven books -- including *Classical Music in America: A History*, named one of the best books of 2005 by *The Economist* -- offer a detailed history and analysis of American symphonic culture, its achievements, challenges, and prospects for the future.

Of his new book, *Artists in Exile: How Refugees from War and Revolution Transformed the American Performing Arts* (HarperCollins, Feb. 2008), Arlene Croce has written: "Joseph Horowitz has taken on a job which very much needed doing, and which needed doing specifically by him. He has made a thoroughgoing analysis of that special European emigration in the last century which so deeply influenced, and was influenced by, American culture. Bringing his superbly cultivated, coordinated interdisciplinary approach to bear on the largest possible scale—from the harbinger Dvorak to Stravinsky and Balanchine, from Paris, Berlin, and St. Petersburg to Hollywood and Broadway; from the Russian Revolution to the Cold War— he gathers dozens of extraordinary lives into a chronicle of epic force."

Mr. Horowitz's book-in-progress is *Fin-de-Siecle: Portraits from America's Gilded Age*.

Beginning in 1999, Mr. Horowitz has served as a free-lance artistic consultant for orchestras throughout the United States. For the New York Philharmonic, he inaugurated the orchestra's ambitious "Inside the Music" series this past fall, writing, hosting, and producing a program on Tchaikovsky's "*Pathetique*" Symphony; he returns to the Philharmonic next fall for a similar treatment of Dvorak's "*New World*" Symphony (Oct. 11, 2008). For the Pacific Symphony (California), he is Artistic Advisor and curates an annual American Music Festival as well as other events. All told, Mr. Horowitz has conceived more than three dozen thematic inter-disciplinary music festivals for a variety of orchestras and performing arts institutions.

In 2003, Mr. Horowitz formed 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 Post-Classical Ensemble “a welcome, edgy addition to the musical life of Washington.”) Pursuing a programming template Mr. Horowitz developed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the orchestra’s concerts regularly incorporate popular/vernacular music, dance, and film. In 2006-2007, Post-Classical Ensemble will be presented at the Coolidge Auditorium (Library of Congress), the Strathmore Performing Arts Center, and the Clarice Smith Performance Arts Center (College Park). The orchestra’s first recording, to be released in January 2007, is a Naxos DVD featuring the classical American documentary films *The Plow that Broke the Plains* and *The River*, with new recordings of the famous Virgil Thomson soundtracks and ancillary material on the New Deal; Mr. Horowitz served as Executive Producer.

In 2004 Mr. Horowitz created “The American Piano,” a touring collaborative festival/residency that has so far been presented at the University of Maryland/College Park and Wesleyan University, with Stanford University and UC/Davis pending.

From 1999 to 2002, he was Director of Historical Projects for the American Symphony Orchestra League (whose former president, Charles Olton, has called him “our nation’s leading scholar of the symphony orchestra”), in which capacity he was Project Director for a three-year NEH-supported National Education Project on “Dvorak in America.”

As Artistic Consultant to IberArtists New York, Mr. Horowitz has been a partner in producing more than a dozen programs of Spanish music in New York City, Washington, D.C., and other American cities.

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.

In Spring 2001, Mr. Horowitz was a Senior Fellow at the Arts Journalism Program at Columbia University. He was subsequently the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and two NEH Fellowships.

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 inter-disciplinary 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, 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 helped 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 superintended 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 also serves as Artistic Advisor to the Toradze Piano Studio, shaping thematic presentations that tour widely; and to “The American Piano,” a touring festival/residency that debuts in Spring 2006 at the Clarice Smith Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Maryland at College Park.

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 also the author of *The Post-Classical Predicament – Essays on Music and Society* (1995) and *Dvorak and America: in Search of the New World* (a young readers book for Cricket, 2003).

Mr. Horowitz's 650-page *Classical Music in the United States: A History of its Rise and Fall* was named one of the best books of 2005 by *The Economist*). Linked to this book is a two-hour radio special, produced and nationally distributed by WFMT of Chicago.

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 Beckerman (1993); *Cultivating Music in America: Women Patrons and Activist 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*, *The Journal of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era*, *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. He is the forthcoming Gardner Lecturer in the Humanities at the University of Utah (Feb. 2007); his topic will be how the history of American music illuminates the history of America.

Mr. Horowitz has produced or co-produced a number of programs for national radio syndication, including treatments of Ives and Transcendentalism, Dvorak in American, and (with Bill McGlaughlin) the history of the American orchestra. As of 2004, he serves as Artistic Advisor to an annual music critics institute sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Mr. Horowitz is included in *Marquis Who's Who in America*.