
SINFONIA ANCASTER AUDIENCE SURVEY ANALYSIS

PIVOT CONCERT — FRIDAY MAY 12, 2023

THE CONCERT

The concert, with a dance theme called *Pivot*, was conceived, hosted, and conducted by our Music Director, Jeffrey Pollock. It was held in Peller Hall, a state-of-the-art 470-seat concert hall in the Ancaster Memorial Arts Centre (AMAC) which opened in 2022. The program began with Brahms' *Hungarian Dance #1*, followed Kilar's *Orawa*, Schreker's *Valse lente*, and Respighi's *Ancient Airs and Dances*. After the intermission there was Robert Schumann's *Fourth Symphony* and Brahms' *Hungarian Dance #5* as an encore. A young pianist from the Avalon Music Academy, an AMAC tenant, played on the lobby grand piano at intermission.

THE SURVEY

The online survey was created in Google Forms and the link provided as a QR code in the concert program. Respondents who gave their name and email were entered in a draw for a pair of tickets for our October concert. The survey was promoted from the stage. Errors in the form resulted in the survey not being available until 10:30 the following morning. A reminder email was sent to our email list when the survey became functional and again five days later. The survey was closed to responses after May 18.

RESPONSE RATE

The survey was available online for 6 days after the concert and 52 responses were received, of which none were from children, 30 from adults and 22 from seniors. A total of 294 tickets were sold or given as comps: 19 children, 168 adults (including the 19 comps) and 107 seniors, so the survey response rates were 0% for children, 17.9% for adults and 20.6% for seniors. These differences are not statistically significant ($P = 0.10$) but it is unfortunate that we did not get opinions from children.

TICKET PRICES

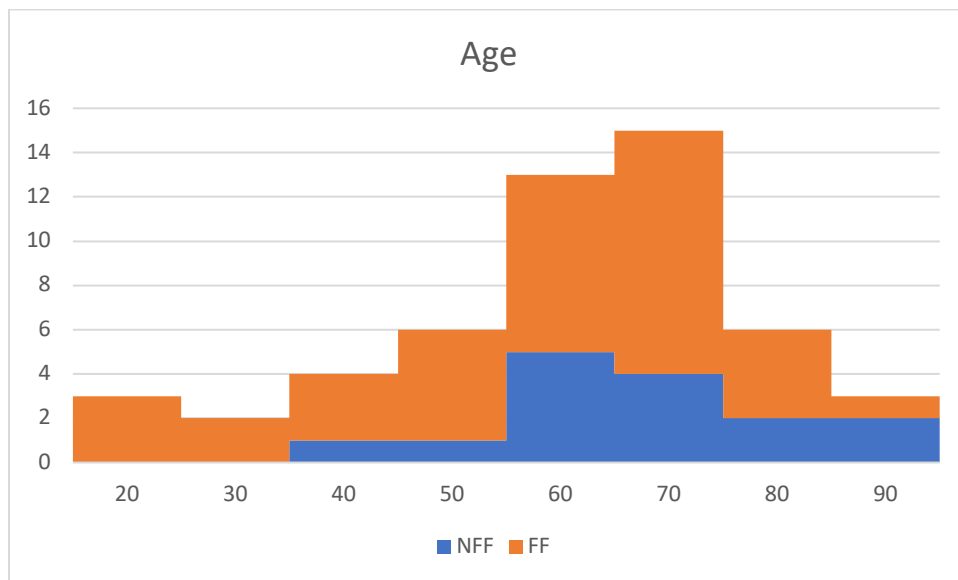
When asked to consider what other groups are charging for live performances, 82.7% of the respondents said that our tickets were "good value" and 17.3% said they were "under-priced" No one said "over-priced".

THE FRIENDS AND FAMILY FACTOR

Of the 52 respondents, 37 (71.2%) said they were friends or relatives of a Sinfonia Ancaster musician or the music director. If we scale that up to the 294 ticket holders, that means an estimated 209 friends and relatives in the audience. There were 43 regular musicians playing, after excluding the "ringers" who only came for one or two rehearsals and the concert. That works out to 4.9 friends and family per regular musician, which is much higher than the 2.7 we found at the *Forces of Nature* concert in March. In some of the following analyses we will look at differences between our Friends & Family (FF) audience and Non-Friends & Family (NFF).

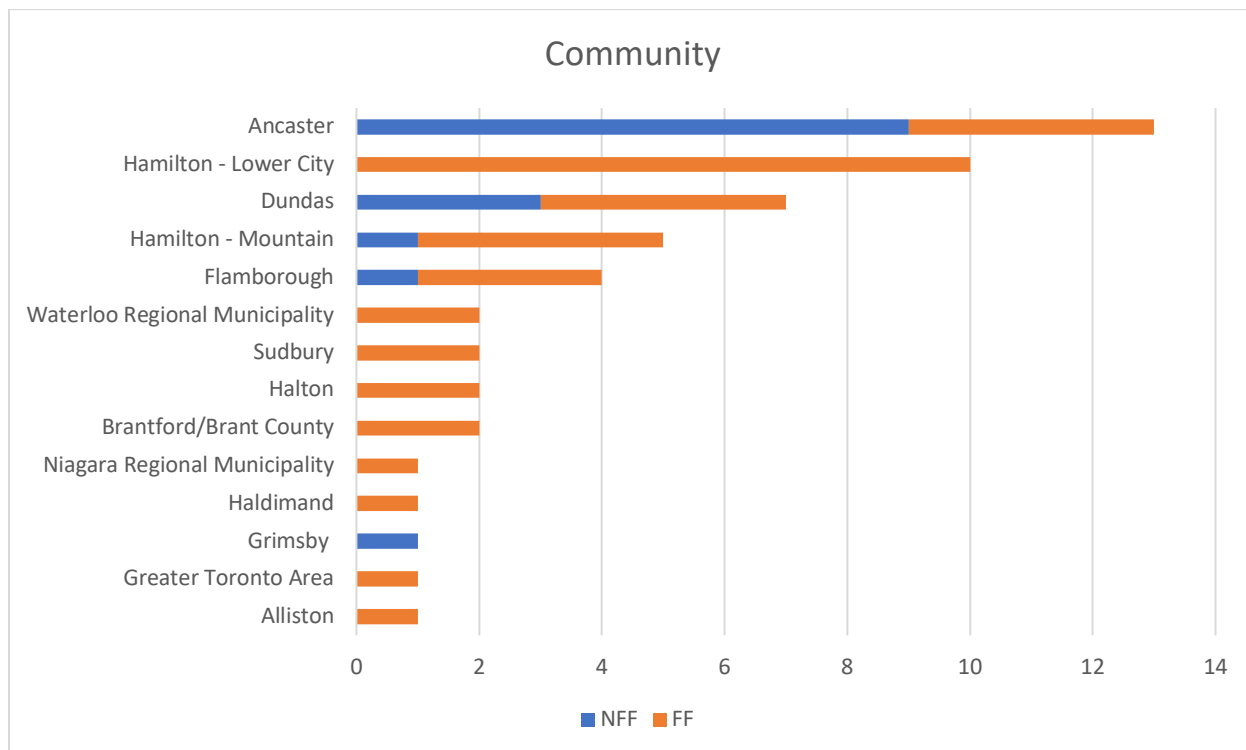
AUDIENCE AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age reported by respondents gave the following distribution. The blue histogram is for NFF; adding the orange bars for FF gives the histogram for the total audience, with NFF and FF combined.



The distribution is shaped much like that observed in March but there are more older patrons, age 65 and up. The better weather in May may have been a factor. The modal age is 70, up from 60 in March, and, again, there is a lack of patrons below age 55. It would be very interesting to compare this distribution with other orchestras in the region.

WHERE THE AUDIENCE LIVES



The geographic distribution of FF matches the geographic distribution of our musicians. The NFF are tightly concentrated in and close to Ancaster and, as shown below, are likely to attend other events at AMAC.

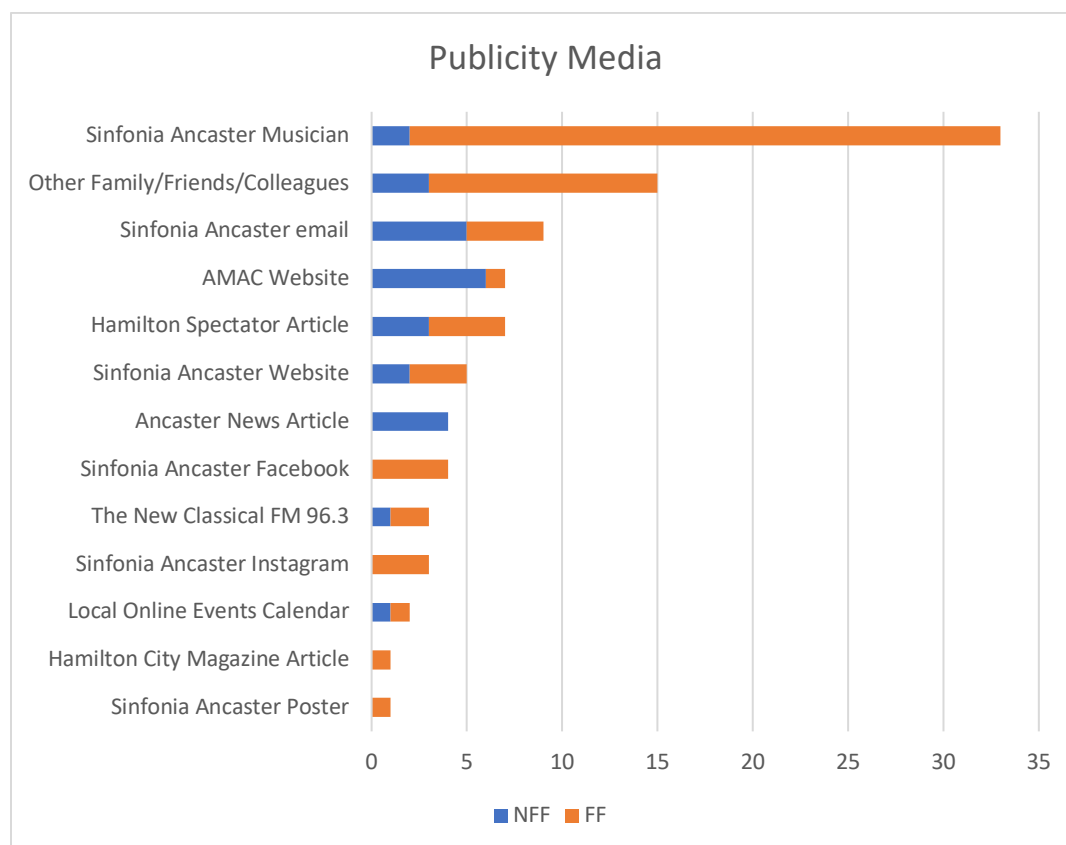
We asked how people had travelled to the concert. Despite the good weather and many people living locally, only 3 respondents (6%) had walked, and the other 84% came by private car. No one came by bicycle, taxi or bus.

AUDIENCE LOYALTY

Of the respondents, 15.4% were at a Sinfonia Ancaster concert for the first time, 40.4% had started attending this season in the Ancaster Memorial Arts Centre, and 44.2% had attended concerts in previous seasons at other venues. This seems to be a healthy mix of new audience and repeat audience.

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE CONCERT?

Respondents were asked to select all that apply.



Those who saw the article in *The Hamilton Spectator* were age 25 to 94, those who saw an Instagram post were age 25 to 64, those who saw a Facebook post were age 45 to 84, those that saw the article in *Ancaster News* were age 65 to 94, those that heard promotion on The New Classical FM 96.3 were age 65 to 94.

It appears that the best ways to reach out to new NFF are Ancaster News, Hamilton Spectator, and the AMAC website. Paid promotion on The New Classical FM 96.3 may advance our reputation but does not seem to have sold many tickets. There were 3 respondents who said they had heard the radio promotion; scaling this up to the 294 ticket holders gives an estimate of 17 people influenced by the radio promotion. Most had senior tickets but even if they all had adult tickets that would only be \$425 in ticket revenue, less than half the cost of the promotion. We could try it again, but it is looking like very few NFF will travel any distance to hear a community orchestra.

It is possible that the people we need to reach are not spending time on social media and we could put less effort there. We believe that meeting people at Ancaster community events is a good way to find new audience, and that our presence on the AMAC website is important. Our email list is vitally important for retaining audience.

WHAT ABOUT THE CONCERT INFLUENCED YOU TO COME?

There were 9 different aspects, and respondents were asked to rate each in a 5-point scale. The Rating is a simple average of their scores. Hearing a live performance of classical music by a local group were the most important factors. While supporting friends or family in the orchestra was important for FF but not for NFF, the two sectors were otherwise similar in their responses.

Aspects Influencing	Rating	Star Rating
Live concert experience	4.70	★★★★★
Classical music	4.20	★★★★☆
Supporting a local music group	4.20	★★★★☆
Innovative or interesting programming	4.16	★★★★☆
Jeffrey Pollock's reputation	4.02	★★★★☆
Sinfonia Ancaster's reputation	3.92	★★★★☆
Supporting friends or family in the orchestra	3.86	★★★★☆
Experiencing the AMAC	3.48	★★★☆☆
Dance theme	3.04	★★★☆☆

WHAT ASPECTS OF THE CONCERT DID YOU ENJOY?

There were 6 different aspects, and respondents were asked to rate each in a 5-point scale. The Rating is a simple average of their scores.

Aspects Enjoyed	Rating	Star Rating
Brahms	4.62	★★★★★
Schumann	4.60	★★★★★
Pollock's presentation of each work	4.54	★★★★★
Kilar	4.40	★★★★☆
Schreker	4.37	★★★★☆
Respighi	4.37	★★★★☆

HOW WAS YOUR OVERALL CONCERT EXPERIENCE?

There were 7 different aspects, and respondents were asked to rate each in a 5-point scale. The Rating is a simple average of their scores.

Overall	Rating	Star Rating
Overall quality of playing	4.56	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Comfort of Peller Hall	4.42	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
Parking experience	4.21	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
Lobby experience	4.08	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
Accessibility	3.90	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆
Piano music in the lobby	3.54	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆
Refreshments	3.19	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

OTHER PERFORMANCES OUR AUDIENCE HAS ATTENDED

In the past 12 months, 17% of the respondents had been to no other musical performance. There was no significant difference in this regard between FF and NFF ($P = 0.46$). Among those who had been to other performances, the most popular musical groups were the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra (35%), Theatre Ancaster (28%), musicals in Toronto (23%), Burlington Symphony (19%), Brott Festival (16%), Hamilton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (14%), Canadian Opera Company (14%). This is an interesting change from the March survey, where 39% had been to no other local performances and only 10% had been to the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.

While 67% of NFF had been to other events at AMAC, only 14% of FF had; this difference is statistically significant ($P = 0.001$). This suggests that most of our NFF are local patrons of the AMAC, Theatre Ancaster in particular, who became aware of Sinfonia Ancaster through the AMAC.

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

- It's amazing to have such a talented group in our community. My wife and I have been to every show this season and are really looking forward to next season. Conductor Jeffrey Pollock does a fantastic job of engaging the audience by adding humour and educational elements to the experience. BRAVO!
- Jeffrey Pollock. It is the reason why I attend because he brings an authentic experience for the audience.
- The conductor's explanation of Symphony No. 4 in D Major (Schumann) was very educational, and I enjoyed it a lot.
- Keep up this very worthwhile program.
- Congratulations to all.
- Love Pollock!! Great presentation! Love the musicians!
- Great show. Love the curation by Pollock. A lovely evening.
- Reinforced audience etiquette to ensure respect to the musicians.
- I hate to say it, but the music seemed muddy. The oboe and horns were crisp and clear, though. The Celeste (sp?) was barely audible and the violins weren't bright or seem to be in unison.
- The introductions by the conductor add greatly to my enjoyment.
- Perfect local evening out — the musical selections were great, and we liked the fact that they were not just the most popular! The conductor explanation of each was also superb. The orchestra looks like they also enjoy playing together. The visuals are also wonderful!
- The quality of the orchestra has skyrocketed! I find the conductor's history about the music greatly enhances the experience plus his humour!

- Excellent theatre with an excellent orchestra!
- Recommend having other white wine options (other than Chardonnay please). Pinot Grigio would be good. Jeff Pollock is an amazing conductor and does an excellent job keeping the audience engaged. Love the classical music pieces he chooses. I always look forward to the next concert. Please keep the December concert Christmas themed. That's one of the best shows of the year and we love a traditional Christmas concert in keeping with the time of year. Thank you for the amazing productions!
- A very enjoyable evening.
- I put a 1 for refreshments and piano music in lobby because I didn't get any refreshments and didn't notice piano music in the lobby, suggestion to add rating options to include "did not partake in refreshment" "did not notice music" so my responses are accurate. Thanks!
- May 12 was particularly good... I enjoyed it more than I had anticipated.
- Excellent performance.
- My wife does not like going to concerts but the choice of music and the conductor's explanation and humorous presentation made the evening light and enjoyable. He is breaking-down the barriers for those who are symphonic-reluctant.
- I enjoyed the variety of music presented; I enjoyed the stories shared prior to the music.
- Enjoy the selections by conductor Pollock, brings such energy to the evening & appreciate the background always provided on the composer and compositions. Thoroughly enjoyed the variety in the choice of programming over the past year with conductor Pollock.
- Very fantastic.
- Jeff is fantastic.
- Overall, a lovely evening!
- I was really pleased that this concert was more traditional music versus the last two concerts, which were too contemporary for my taste.
- The questions asking about each musical piece require a respondent who remembers all of that - not me! I loved it all, though, so answered "very enjoyable"... The questions about the refreshments, etc. might be better if there was a "NA" or "I am unable to comment on this" to be more accurate. Great job on the concert, and I hope to attend future ones!
- Thank-you for making our evening!
- Wonderful sound in a wonderful hall. Keep up the great work!
- All seems to be on the right track.
- I really liked the explanations by the conductor and the art on the screen.
- Maybe a 7:30 start. Good backscreen images, Staff very helpful.

Peter Macdonald, P.Stat.

Michelle Fawcett

2023-06-30