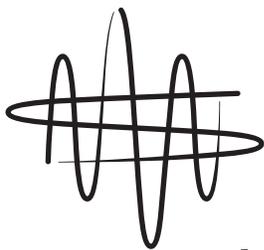


Building on Trust at the New World Symphony

Based in Miami Beach, Florida, the New World Symphony is known as “America’s Orchestral Academy.” Founded in 1987, the organization enrolls graduates of top music programs and prepares them for roles in professional orchestras and ensembles worldwide. Distinguished conductor Michael Tilson Thomas has provided the artistic vision for the academy since its founding. Housed for more than a decade in a historic movie theater, the New World Symphony saw the need for a larger and more flexible space for its educational, performance, rehearsal, and administrative activities. The City of Miami Beach generously offered the symphony an attractive piece of real estate that would satisfy its need for expanded space in a state-of-the-art facility. This case examines the plans developed by the administration of the New World Symphony for its new home, in particular the operating cost projections for using the facility once it was built. The economic recession of 2008-09, however, forced some difficult decisions for the administration and board of trustees in order to see the project to its completion.



New World Symphony

America’s Orchestral Academy
Michael Tilson Thomas, Artistic Director

This case study was prepared by Michael Alan Anderson, Associate Professor of Musicology at the Eastman School of Music. *The Eastman Case Studies* are developed solely as the basis for class discussion. Cases are not intended to serve as endorsements or sources of primary data nor are they to serve as illustrations of effective or ineffective leadership or decision making.

Background

In the mid-1980s, celebrated conductor Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) expressed concern that graduates of the most prestigious music conservatories were insufficiently equipped to land positions in orchestras. Supply of musicians far exceeded demand, and MTT believed even the most promising young musicians needed more preparation than they had been given in music schools. He envisioned a training ground for the world's outstanding instrumentalists to launch successful careers. From its inaugural concert on February 4, 1988, the New World Symphony (NWS) was the realization of MTT's artistic vision. Known as "America's Orchestral Academy," NWS admits graduates of top music programs and readies its students for leadership roles not only in professional orchestras but also in smaller musical ensembles. Despite its name, the New World Symphony has more aspects of a school than one would expect. It is fully accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music, though it does not grant degrees, nor does it charge tuition to its students. Based in Miami Beach, the NWS sponsors 87 early-career musicians ("Fellows"), who receive free housing and a weekly stipend for 35 weeks per year for up to three years. The program is highly competitive: applicants have roughly a 2% chance of being accepted as Fellows.

Great opportunities and benefits await those who enroll in NWS. The Fellowship program allows students to refine their skills as musicians and to advocate for the profession. Opportunities further abound at the academy for exposure to high-profile conductors and visiting faculty, regularly welcomed into residence. Not only do Fellows expand their repertorial horizons in the training orchestra, but NWS also provides professional development training for its Fellows, crucial in the competitive marketplace of classical music. Fellows learn how to educate audiences and engage the community, in addition to entertaining them

with music. Despite regular turnover of nearly one-third of the Fellows every season, reviewers have consistently lauded NWS concerts for their high level of artistic excellence and professionalism. Fellows also make time to understand fundraising and entrepreneurship in the arts. Over 95% of NWS's "graduates" go on to find jobs in the classical music world. For over a generation, the NWS has helped launch the careers of more than 1,000 alumni worldwide.

NWS was founded with the significant financial support and vision of Ted Arison, founder of Carnival Cruise Lines, and his wife Lin. The couple had previously founded the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (YoungArts today) in Miami. The Arisons provided initial seed capital to NWS to ensure balanced operating budgets in the early years, purchased the organization's first campus facilities, and made two gifts, in 1991 and 1996, totaling \$50 million to establish the NWS endowment fund, thereby ensuring the long-term viability of the organization. The Arisons were joined by numerous other individuals, foundations, corporations, and government entities that continue to fund a substantial portion of NWS's operating, capital, and endowment needs. With this broad base of support, NWS has been able to establish itself as a "research and development" laboratory for the orchestral world, in addition to its role in educating already outstanding musicians. Fulfilling MTT's dream to advance the talent of instrumentalists for the future of the profession, the academy is in an enviable position to form a bridge between sheltered academic life and the "real world" to benefit maturing musicians and to ensure the viability of classical music.

Pressed for Space

Within a year of incorporation, NWS took ownership of a 1930s art deco movie theater, the Lincoln Theatre, renovated it for daily use, and also purchased two nearby hotels for student living space. MTT was