

**The Core Values of Classical Music Radio:
Focus Group: Listener Comments on why they use classical music
radio and what they find gratifying about that experience.**

1. LISTENING TO THE MUSIC IS SOOTHING

That's my headache station. When everything else is giving me a headache, I switch to it...I agree with him completely. When you're having a bad day and stuff, you can turn that on and wind down really quick and it really helps.

Well, I like the soft music and classical. I like classical music.

What do you like about it?

Well, there's enough problems in the world, I don't need agitating music...It's soothing.

You know what? It's just soothing. You know, we all live in such a fast-paced world that you get in the car and you're driving along and it helps you. It helps you clear your head for a moment, whatever stress you have before you get to work. And after work, it's the same thing.

Its' soothing. It really is relaxing, especially after when I work 10-12 hours a day. I work six days a week. I come home and I've got three kids making a bunch of noise and then they go to bed. So it just sounds great.

It keeps me calm in traffic...I just feel very peaceful, whatever, with the classical.

It's just serene.

Serene? Meaning what?

It's soothing. You don't have to—you can just go along with it. It flows.

I've got it's informative. It's inspiring. It's a pick-me-up, and it's a take-me-away.

That's great. Tell me what do you mean, take me away? Help me out.

Well, sometimes when I'm really stressed or something I can just kind of turn it on and listen to it and close my eyes and let the music float me away, and it takes me out of the stress and so I can come back to it kind of renewed, and pick up what I left off.

So if you could just sum it up, what need does this station satisfy in your life now?

The need for peace.

The need for peace? Very good.

2. BUT THERE IS ALSO INTELLIGENCE IN THE MUSIC

I think classical music requires more of you. It requires more of you, as a listener. So when you talk about "Warm106.9" that's mindless stuff. It's soda pop, in comparison to a deep cup of espresso or a really fine wine.

It's intellectually interesting music and if I want to focus on it that way, I can. Or if I just want to be calmed and just enjoy the music, I can do that too.

Well, classical music, it's got a complexity to it. This whole orchestra is working together and sometimes it's interesting to kind just listen to how it works and how some composition that's playing is put together, the way things repeat. I find that interesting.

Classical music seems to have much more substance than most other musics. There's more to it. I mean, you listen to rock and you get three or four chords. I listen to classical music and I'm just fascinated about the development of the music. I mean ...It's intricate... the range of instruments and the intricacy of it...Classical music is a higher level, I think, than a lot of other music. It just gets you thinking.

It's just something above the common herd of so much other stuff in every phase of our society that's being notched down to the least common denominator. And classical music is something that can elevate you.

The level of intelligence, I mean, it's just the opposite of the raucous, blithering Goddamned idiots on the rock stations and the country stations and all the rest of it, and all the trash television. It's just the antithesis of popular lowest common denominator entertainment. And if that sounds snobbish, it is!

3. CLASSICAL MUSIC CLEARS THE MIND AND HELPS LISTENERS FOCUS ON THEIR TASKS

I'm sure we've all seen studies here and there from time to time from those people who do such things, that classical music does alter your brain waves. Has anybody else seen that? And so, actually, it can, maybe, it has a physical reaction ...lowers your blood pressure. Yes, you can concentrate better.

It helps you tie into what you're doing, whatever it is. If it's writing, if it's doing whatever, because the flavor of the task, whether it's carving wood or sanding or painting something or being precise, or whether it's writing a poem and you just need the feeling. So then you want to listen to feeling.

I just feel if I'm doing paperwork or something like that, it seems to be enjoyable yet you can achieve what you want to. It just seems to help clear the way and make it easier, I guess.

It gives me something to focus on; it brings order into chaos. Because, if you listen to Mozart, you are going to order your mind. It just happens that way. If you listen to Bach, it just orders your mind. I have a hard time with Beethoven.

Yes.

Yes, it makes me carsick. But that's another subject.

For some reason, if I have to do a lot of paperwork I love classical music. Like when I've gotta do my tax return or something for hours and hours and hours, there's nothing like soft classical music in the background...helps keep you going.

How does that happen?

I don't know. I've heard they've done studies like Mozart stimulates your intellect or something.

4. CLASSICAL MUSIC IS SOMETHING THAT IS TIMELESS AND BEAUTIFUL (COMPARED TO TODAY'S CULTURAL DECLINE)

I think it connects us with God, because music is the language of the universe. I can be sitting in a concert surrounded by people that maybe don't even speak English, but the music speaks to us all the same.

I think it's something to do with feelings -- that you hear all this other stuff and something doesn't stir you. But if you listen to something like classical music or a concert or a dance, ballet, or listen to Opera or go to an Art Museum, look at some old paintings, something inside you gets stirred.

Sometimes when I listen and I'll say, okay, and this was written by so and so in 1853, and I think, okay, this is 150 years old. What's being composed now that people are going to be listening to in 153 years? And I think, nothing, they're gonna still be listening to this. This is going to hang around. Some of our stuff isn't.

I almost feel like society's headed toward coarser entertainment and just a lot less things that are really beautiful, and that's one of the few things that seems to remain. And it'd be real disappointing to me that something that I consider a big light, I guess, would be gone, if it would disappear.

It fills my soul sometimes. I can be feeling down and out or lonely or whatever, and I can listen to that. If I just really concentrate and let it, you can just feel it. It just fills your soul, and reminds you of all the beauty and all the worthwhileness of life.

5. LISTENERS LIKE TO LEARN "A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE MUSIC"

I decided I wanted to learn more about classical music. I know nothing. I had no training, no education. I can't even read music, but I enjoy classical music.

I listen to it... partly to sharpen my listening skills. So when you go to a symphony, when you hear a recital, or whatever, you can judge them better, because those are really broadcasting the best musicians on the CDs.

KING is just like they said, the hosts, you listen to them, you learn. I don't consider myself a classical, you know to be knowledgeable, I just like the feeling I get when I listen to music....I'd agree with that, too. I'm not knowledgeable in music, but I enjoy listening to it... Actually I've gotten more knowledgeable listening to it because I will know the piece or a little bit about the piece, and they will say this was written in this time.

Well, I'll be the devil's advocate here. Like why do you care? What difference does it make, one way or the other?

I like learning.

I grew up in an era with mainly rock music and I know a lot about that. But in terms of classical music, I mean, I like listening to it and because I like listening to it I want to know more about it, learn more about the background, the history of it, and the composers and all that. So, it gives me a context as to how to appreciate the music.

6. SUMMARY OF THE RELATIVE VALUE LISTENERS GIVE TO LEARNING ABOUT CLASSICAL MUSIC VS. THE STRESS RELIEF THEY GET FROM THE MUSIC.

Let's see what you guys wrote on this one. Just roughly, the first one says an important reason I might listen to the station is to learn about classical music....you wrote down three very important. (One member of the focus group raises his hand)

The first one says to relieve stress, soothing and relaxing. How many said very important? (All members of the group raise their hands.)

That's a biggie, huh?

To learn more about classical music, how many of you wrote down very important? Good. First one, to learn more about classical music. That's your answer. (Roughly one third of the group raises their hand.) Why's that important? It tells you about each piece and who it was and what year.

But why do you want to know about that?

It's interesting.

Just interesting?

Yes, and it tells me what CDs to go out and buy.

Okay. Next one is to relieve stress. How many said three on that? (Everyone in group raises and hands.) Everybody. Big deal on that one huh?