



## VALUE & IMPACT STUDY

## SUPPLEMENTARY RESEARCH

### Additional Insights on Donors, Ticket-Buyers & Audiences

Commissioned by Major University Presenters with funding support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

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## Research Background

In 2004, fourteen members of the Major University Presenters (MUP) consortium - without foundation support - commissioned WolfBrown to conduct a two-year study of the values and motivations driving performing arts attendance and donation. The findings of *The Value & Impact Study* are available in three public reports, which are available for free download at [www.wolfbrown.com/mup](http://www.wolfbrown.com/mup):

- *Assessing the Intrinsic Impacts of Live Performance*
- *A Segmentation Model for Performing Arts Ticket Buyers*
- *A Segmentation Model for Donors to 12 University Presenting Programs*
- *Value & Impact Study Supplemental Research: Additional Insights on Donors, Ticket-Buyers & Audiences*

While the study concluded in 2007, much knowledge remained to be harvested from the substantial data sets that the study produced. Recognizing the opportunity, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation funded a \$50,000 proposal from the MUP consortium to extend the value of the study's two major datasets by commissioning 10 focused research papers.

WolfBrown oversaw a competitive selection process starting in October 2007 and welcomed proposals from faculty, research staff and students from all colleges and universities, and all disciplines. The proposals were evaluated based on the significance and relevance of their topic and research questions, the extent to which the research was likely to yield practical applications for the study partners – particularly in the areas of marketing and fundraising, and overall quality and rigor of the proposal.

The funded proposals went to both faculty members and graduate students; five proposals had faculty members serving as the principal investigator (PI), and five had graduate students as PI. The funded researchers represent a broad range of academic departments – public policy; sociology, tourism, recreation and sports management; arts administration; marketing; and business – and a variety of universities.

On behalf of the MUP consortium, we extend our appreciation to the Mellon Foundation for their foresight in allowing *The Value & Impact Study* to pay additional dividends. We encourage other researchers who would like to examine the original data files to be in touch with us, in the spirit of learning.

Sincerely,



Alan S. Brown, Principal



Jennifer L. Novak, Consultant

# Overview of Papers

The supported research papers fall into three general topics: Donors, Ticket-buyers & Demand, and Impact. In addition, three papers cover special areas of interest: the relationship between Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences and ticket-buying, the affect of pre-performance enhancement events on impact, and the relationship between political views and both donation and ticket-buying behavior. Below are brief summaries of each paper, which are followed by more detailed abstracts, organized by general topic.

## Donors

1. **The Influence of Marketing Messages and Benefits Received On Attributions of Donation Behavior to Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations** - *Jennifer Wiggins Johnson & Bret Ellis*. This paper seeks to better understand what influenced the degree to which donors perceive extrinsic benefits as the motivations for giving.
2. **Study of MUP Donors Motivation, Behavior, and Benefits** - *May Kim, Yong JaeKo & Heather Gibson*. This paper provides a review of theoretical frameworks that guide current perspectives on donor motivation.

## Ticket-Buyers & Demand

3. **Preferences and Purchase Behavior: Survey Evidence on the Relationship between Stated Interested in the Performing Arts and Ticket Purchase History** - *Sarah Lee*. This paper examines the relationship between individuals' stated preferences for performances and their actual history of ticket-buying.
4. **Community Contexts of University Presenters and Their Audiences** - *Tanya Koropecjy-Cox, Charles Gattone, William Jawde, & Deeb-Paul Kitchen*. This paper offers broader sociological perspective to the understanding of audience values and preferences, by considering the larger community contexts of the presenter-audience relationship.
5. **Anticipation: Exploring its Origins and Effects on the Live Arts Experience** - *Jara Kern*. This paper examines the causal factors and relationships underlying high levels of anticipation for performing arts programs.

## Impact

6. **How We Feel About Art: Motivation, Satisfaction, and Emotional Experience in Performing Arts Audiences** - *Shelly Gilbride & David Orzechowicz*. This paper explores performing arts audiences' self-reported emotional experiences and how they relate to reasons for attending, expectations for, and satisfaction levels with a performance.
7. **Social Influences on Intrinsic Impacts of Performance** - *Trina Rose*. This paper examines the relationships between social and emotional factors and attendance, subscription and post-performance impact.

**Special Interest Topics**

8. **Analysis of Multiple Intelligences in Understanding the Relationships between Ticket Buyers and Their Participation in Performing Arts Programs** - *Mark Creekmore & Sarah Rush*. This paper examines the validity of using the Values & Impact data to study Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and investigates relationship between intelligences and preferences for types of performances.
  
9. **Characterizing Program Enhancement Events** - *Yael Zipporah Silk & Jordan Raphael Fischbach*. This paper profiles the enhancement event audience base, examines the impact of enhancement events on patrons who self-select to attend, and identifies characteristics that are predictive of pre- or post-performance event preferences.
  
10. **How Beliefs Matter: Views, Motives and their Relation to Buyer and Donor Behavior** - *Ximena Varela*. This paper investigates audiences political beliefs and explores the relationship between political views and both ticket-buyer and donor behavior.

# Abstracts

## Donors

### **1. The Influence of Marketing Messages and Benefits Received On Attributions of Donation Behavior to Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations**

*Jennifer Wiggins Johnson & Bret Ellis*

Wiggins Johnson and Ellis examine the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of donors to performing arts organizations using the data from the 1,771 donor respondents from the *Value Study* conducted in October 2006. The authors use the twenty items measuring different motivations to donate from these respondents, along with information on their donations from 2003-2006 and their relationships with the presenters to which they had donated. This paper seeks to better understand what influenced the degree to which respondents would perceive extrinsic benefits as the motivations for their donations. Additional data on the communications messages that respondents were likely to experience and the benefits that they were likely to receive in exchange for their donations is used to establish that the messages and benefits that donors receive can influence their attributions of their donation behavior to intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. This suggests that organizations can deliberately or inadvertently influence donor motivations through their communications.

### **2. Study of MUP Donors Motivation, Behavior, and Benefits**

*May Kim, Yong Jae Ko & Heather Gibson*

In this paper, the authors offer a review of theoretical frameworks that guide current perspectives on donor motivation and its influence on donor amount or donor benefits. Using this review to structure their analyses, the authors explore donor motivations, the influence of gender and age on donor motivations, the relationship between donor motivations and donor behavior, and the relationship between donor motivations and donor benefits.

In addition, these authors wrote a second paper utilizing the Value & Impact Study data entitled *An examination of factors that influence donor behavior: The case of University art museums in the US*, and is available upon request.

## Ticket-Buyers & Demand

### **3. Preferences and Purchase Behavior: Survey Evidence on the Relationship between Stated Interested in the Performing Arts and Ticket Purchase History**

*Sarah Lee*

In this paper, Lee uses the Major University Presenters' *Value Study* dataset to examine the relationship between individuals' stated preferences for performances across a variety of performance types and their actual history of purchasing tickets to performances of those

same types. The author finds that there is a substantial proportion of the arts-going population who exhibit strong preferences for various types of performances, but whose ticket purchase behavior alone would not reveal those preferences (“high-demand non-purchasers”). Lee then develops a profile of high-demand non-purchasers in each performance type, focusing on the differences between high-demand non-purchasers and purchasers in demographic and background characteristics, cultural attitudes, and motivations. This paper briefly surveys the literature on participation, audience-building, and marketing in the arts; discusses the data used for this analysis; presents simple statistical evidence on the relationship between stated preferences and ticket purchase history; profiles high-demand non-purchasers, and uses these profiles to draw conclusions about potential barriers to attendance among high-demand non-purchasers.

#### **4. Community Contexts of University Presenters and Their Audiences**

*Tanya Koropeckyj-Cox, Charles Gattone, William Jawde, & Deeb-Paul Kitchen*

This paper builds on the original *Value & Impact Study* analyses by adding two important sociological perspectives to the understanding of audience values and preferences, taking into account the larger community contexts of the presenter-audience relationship. First, focusing on social and cultural characteristics, the authors construct an alternative audience segmentation model that draws more specifically on sociological research on social capital and engagement, socioeconomic dimensions of taste, and subculture affinities. The authors examine how an audience segmentation model based on social attributes and cultural affinities can help to elucidate audience preferences and potential attendance. Second, they incorporate data on the specific community contexts of the Major University Presenters (and their potential audiences) to examine the influence of contextual dimensions on the relations of audience characteristics with preferences and attendance. Specifically, the research addresses the following research questions:

- 1) What kind of audience segmentation results from an explicit emphasis on measures of social engagement, institutional connection, and cultural affinities?
- 2) How is this socially based segmentation related to socio-demographic characteristics and to particular audience preferences and potential attendance at performances?
- 3) How does this relationship intersect with characteristics of the larger communities in which the audience members and the University Presenters are located?

The findings offer a nuanced assessment of audience preferences within their particular communities and inform strategies for planning, marketing, and outreach that take into account contextual variations. The findings also help to inform policy and arts development by considering the interrelations of communities, institutions, and audience populations.

#### **5. Anticipation: Exploring its Origins and Effects on the Live Arts Experience**

*Jara Kern*

For almost any presenter of the live performing arts, *captivation, satisfaction, and remembered value* are the gold standards of a job well done. Audience members and artists who experience a powerfully positive impact during the event, and remember the moment vividly for years to come, become the favored stories of success among most arts presenters. These remembered experiences provide the catalyst for future attendance and increasing connection to the organization and its work. Yet, despite the core importance of captivation,

satisfaction, and remembered value, precious little specific research has explored where these experiences come from, how they work, and how they might be more thoughtfully encouraged. This paper is an effort to encourage such understanding and strategy. Its particular focus is on the role and influence of anticipation on the perceived satisfaction and remembered value of a live performance experience. This paper suggests and tests a causal model, examines findings from relevant literature, and incorporates interviews with audience members, practitioners, and content experts. The paper aims to provide performing arts practitioners with actionable insights on anticipation, and its central function in fostering satisfaction and remembered value in the live performing arts. This paper focuses on the relationship between cause and effect, or the causal flow, for the creation of high levels of anticipation for cultural content.

## Impact

### **6. How We Feel About Art: Motivation, Satisfaction, and Emotional Experience in Performing Arts Audiences**

*Shelly Gilbride & David Orzechowicz*

Using data collected from the *MUPS Value & Impact Study*, Gilbride and Orzechowicz explore the dimensions of self-reported emotional experiences in performing arts audiences. Specifically, the authors look at how these emotional experiences relate to the reasons people attend productions, the expectations they bring with them, the relevance of the performing arts to their daily lives, and their satisfaction with a show. Gilbride and Orzechowicz conduct the first analyses of the qualitative emotions data available from the study and construct ten broad categories of emotional experiences, with an additional six subcategories to provide a more nuanced understanding. These categories are based on the work of Robert Plutchik's categorization of basic and secondary emotions, as well as other research on emotion typologies. The authors then explore the relationship between these experiences and audience demographics, performance genres, and reported levels of captivation and satisfaction. Much of the analysis focuses on five specific emotional experiences: anger, dissatisfaction, fear, inspiration, and joy. The research reveals that certain emotional experiences often seen as negative in most social situations, such as fear and anger, are associated with higher levels of satisfaction and repeat arts consumers. "Positive" emotions like joy, on the other hand, are associated with lower levels of satisfaction and audience members who were out of their comfort zone. The authors speculate on the meaning of these associations and their relevance to the performing arts community.

### **7. Social Influences on Intrinsic Impacts of Performance**

*Trina Rose*

There have been a number of studies regarding audiences of cultural arts. Lacking, however, is the knowledge of social and emotional factors of these audience members. What social and emotional factors predict attendance and subscription? For example, is the person or persons one attends a performance with related to their post performance impacts? The author explores this question and other gaps in the literature in more detail. To engage in this investigation, this paper uses cross-sectional data from *The Value & Impact Study* and conducts a series of path analyses to gauge whether these social factors are related with post-performance impacts, and whether these emotional factors are associated with subscription

and attendance. Results indicate that patrons' reasons for attending a performance, social factors, and ticket price were significantly related to post-performance impacts. Additionally, post-performance impacts were significantly related to attending live performances and performance discipline.

## Special Interest Topics

### **8. Analysis of Multiple Intelligences in Understanding the Relationships between Ticket Buyers and Their Participation in Performing Arts Programs**

*Mark Creekmore & Sarah Rush*

The concept of multiple intelligences (MI) has been used in educational settings, but it can also be used to differentiate arts' patrons by their different abilities, sensibilities and orientations. The hope is that this knowledge may be used to create more specific communication and marketing tools and identify ways to understand and address the preferences among different kinds of patrons. Using the Values Survey from *The Value and Impact Study*, nine forms of MI (Linguistic, logical-Mathematical, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Musical, Spatial, Naturalist, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Existential) are examined in relation to other patron characteristics, including demographic information, inner-directed values, outer-directed values and performance preferences. A considerable portion of this research focused on validating the nine intelligences, identifying relations with performance preferences and investigating differences across the study sites.

### **9. Characterizing Program Enhancement Events**

*Yael Zipporah Silk & Jordan Raphael Fischbach*

Offering enhancement events is often viewed as a way to draw in casual audiences, provide them with knowledge they may not already have, and in turn positively impact their future participation. This paper profiles the enhancement event audience base, examines the impact of enhancement events on patrons who self-select to attend, and identifies characteristics that are predictive of pre- or post-performance event preferences. Utilizing data from two patron surveys, the authors analyze mean preference for enhancement events to create profiles of enhancement event attendees. Next, they examine mean outcomes for patrons who attended specific pre-performance events and performed a difference-of-differences analysis taking enhancement event attendance frequency into account and, finally, develop several simple prediction models to identify characteristics associated with preferences for enhancement events. The authors find that enhancement events are primarily serving patrons who are have strong allegiances to presenters, are frequent ticket buyers, and donate. Pre-performance attendance also correlates with a number of intrinsic outcome measures, though the effect appears to be greater for patrons who rarely attend enhancement events. Finally, age, appetite for new works, risk taking, personal creativity, allegiance to presenter, and seeking a connection to artists are all associated with preferences for enhancement events. These results point to an opportunity to deepen performance audiences by broadening and diversifying enhancement event audiences, which could in turn affect future participation decisions.



## **10. How Beliefs Matter: Views, Motives and their Relation to Buyer and Donor Behavior**

*Ximena Varela*

The connection between beliefs, values and the *production* of art has long been acknowledged. Whether it is the artist's intent to make a political or value statement, or whether art is used as a vehicle for political messages or channel for values, the arts convey ideas, emotions, and elicit thought, feeling, and even action. But what happens on the side of *consumption*? Can the public's value systems and political beliefs be linked to specific patterns of arts attendance or even support for the arts? Put another way; are audiences who self-identify as conservative more likely to attend a particular arts event over another? Do their motivations to provide support for the arts vary from those who are more liberal? Do liberals and conservatives expect different things in return for their support of the arts? What are the implications for arts presenters? The paper begins with an overview of the audiences surveyed for the study in terms of their political beliefs, and provides additional descriptive statistics for age and sex distributions. This is followed by an explanation of the methodology used for the analytical process. The paper then divides into two sections: the first discusses the relationship between political views and ticket buying, while the second focuses on political views and donor behavior. It concludes with a discussion of the implications of these findings for performing arts presenters.

**How We Feel About Art: Motivation, Satisfaction, and Emotional Experience in  
Performing Arts Audiences**

**Paper #6**

Shelly Gilbride & David Orzechowicz

## ABSTRACT

In this paper, we consider the self-reported emotional experience from “high” art audiences. Using data collected from the *MUPS Values and Impact Study*, this paper explores the dimensions of these felt experiences in performing arts audiences. Specifically we look at how these emotional experiences relate to the reasons people attend productions, the expectations they bring with them, the relevance of the performing arts to their daily lives, and their satisfaction with a show. We use the qualitative emotions data from the *MUP Values and Impact Study* to construct ten broad categories of felt experiences, with an additional six subcategories to provide a more nuanced understanding of some of these experiences. These categories are based on the work of Robert Plutchik’s categorization of basic and secondary emotions as well as other research on emotion typologies. We then explore the relationship between these experiences and audience demographics, genres of performance, and reported levels of captivation and satisfaction. We find that while many emotional experiences are associated with all genres of performance and men and women, some tended to be linked to a particular genre or sex. Much of our analysis focuses on five specific emotional experiences: anger, dissatisfaction, fear, inspiration, and joy. Here we find that certain emotional experiences often seen as negative in most social situations, such as fear and anger, are associated with higher levels of satisfaction and repeat arts consumers. “Positive” emotions like Joy, on the other hand, are associated with lower levels of satisfaction and audience members who were out of their comfort zone. We speculate on the meaning of these associations and their relevance to the performing arts community.

*“Aesthetic experience is as important to human life as sex, hunger, aggression, love and hate. Although we may rarely be conscious of it, aesthetic experience gives form, meaning, and most important, value to everything we are and everything we do. Theoretically, without it, life would be a shapeless, meaningless and colorless series of sensations, events and reactions... Every aspect of our experience has an aesthetic dimension (or perhaps dimensions), and that this dimension is optimally elaborated and refined throughout life” (1).*

George Hagman: Aesthetic Experience

Psychologist George Hagman eloquently articulates the necessity of art and beauty to human life. Hagman equates the importance of aesthetic experience to our most intense emotions; love and hate. His argument frees the aesthetic, a loaded term in academic usage, from the confines of high art and inserts it into the daily life of all people.<sup>1</sup> He articulates that it is the aesthetic experience that shapes our value systems and gives meaning to our lives. Hagman starts to link the value that we place on the aesthetic with our emotional connection to that experience. Perhaps it is because the aesthetic experience is so intertwined with the emotional that we have such a difficult time articulating the value of it; the emotional connection is assumed. Arts advocates, like Hagman, use evocative, compelling language – emotional language – to promote the arts. While this paper is concerned with the emotional experience of what is classically considered high art, the experience of participating in a performing arts event from the national touring arts circuit, Hagman’s emotional language reminds us that the aesthetic experience is a universal one, but one that we know little about. We often assume that the arts, as a form of entertainment, bring people joy, pleasure or a sense of wonder. But many works of art work on a different emotional plane – provoking or illuminating. Humor also often carries within it incredible sadness. We assume that if people are entertained, they have a pleasurable experience. But what happens if people leave the theatre melancholy or angry? Are they still satisfied with the experience? We have little research into the specifics of the emotional connection. Using the data collected from the *MUPS Values and Impact Study*, this paper begins to tease out the emotional resonance that aesthetic experiences have.

Our point of departure for an analysis of emotional response and its relationship to satisfaction with arts participation is the question, “What emotions did you feel most intensely?” This paper explores the dimensions of these felt experiences in performing arts audiences. We attempt to begin a process of understanding the emotional value of arts events and the relationship between emotional response and satisfaction. We use the qualitative emotions data from the *MUP Values and Impact Study* to construct ten broad categories of felt experiences, with an additional six subcategories to provide a more nuanced understanding of some of these experiences. We constructed the categories based on Robert Plutchik’s categorization of basic and secondary emotions as well as other research on emotional categorization from the psychological and sociological perspectives of experts such as Ed S. Tan and Nancy Eisenberg. We then explore the relationship between these experiences and audience demographics, genres of performance, and reported levels of captivation and satisfaction. Our findings and their import for performing arts presenters are then discussed.

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<sup>1</sup> In his book, Hagman elucidate the history of Aesthetics in academia as having elitist, high art connotations that assume specific definitions of beauty and art in a very limited Western perspective. What Hagman and other scholars have attempted recently is to redefine the term Aesthetic with a more inclusive context.

## BACKGROUND

Central to any discussion on the value of participating in arts events is the conceptualization of art as a lived experience rather than a consumed product. The debate between the intrinsic (experiential) versus the instrumental (consumption) value of art is ongoing in this country. We can see the evolution of the debate from the continually invoked philosophies of early 20<sup>th</sup> century scholar John Dewey to the culture wars of the 1990s to the current arts research including the RAND Study, *The Gifts of the Muse* and the *MUP Values and Impact Study*. Ultimately most of the contemporary studies reveal a continuum between the instrumental value of arts like economic revitalization of artsy neighborhoods and higher math scores in children to the intrinsic value, the unquantifiable personal experience that arts experiences provide. This experiential value is what arts advocates fight to be given equal weight in these debates. When assessing emotional impact, the experiential is at the fore. But while it seems that the instrumental and the intrinsic are often articulated as binaries with antagonistic value assertions, when assessing the emotional impact, we can see the potential interplay between the intrinsic and instrumental in a symbiotic manner. Although arts audiences are consuming a product when they purchase a ticket to a performance, their experience is not a material or economic one. Rather they leave a show or showing with emotional (not material) goods: a set of felt experiences, such as joy, awe, disappointment, or serenity. These felt experiences can influence or even create value and belief systems that in turn influence how people relate to the world and affect their consumption habits. The intrinsic experiences can keep patrons coming back to the theatre and sharing their experiences with others. In other words, there are instrumental effects of intrinsic experiences. As scholar Ed Tan states in his analysis of aesthetic emotions,

“People relate to art works, to texts, and to ideas. Much of what is meaningful in their lives may include political, aesthetic and religious ideas; books; artifacts such as paintings and photographs, television programs, fashion in dress; and lifestyle. The world of ideas and artifacts can mean just as much to them as the world of real people or the world of nature” (116).

While we take issue with the distinction between the world of ideas and the world of real people, Tan is articulating the idea that art can have a profound emotional impact, an impact that can be just as fundamental to life as the emotional impact of events and relationships in ones’ personal life.

## METHODS

If we take seriously the claim that the arts are an experiential cultural good, then we need to become familiar with audience’s emotional experiences and understand their role in the ways audiences engage in creative consumption. The *MUP Values and Impact Study* provides qualitative and quantitative data that capture these experiences, and help us begin to explore the dynamics of aesthetic experience. Patrons were asked to complete the survey within 24 hours of watching a performance. Questions focused on intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional experiences, as well as overall captivation and satisfaction with the show.

### *Sample*

Part of the utility of the *Values and Impact Study* lies in the diversity of the experiences it includes. A variety of types of performances were included in the project sample, from classical music to Shakespeare to contemporary dance. While all patrons attended performances in university towns, these schools were geographically diverse from Ann Arbor, Michigan to Berkeley, California to Gainesville, Florida and Lincoln, Nebraska. Each community has its own identity, each institution is unique and each artist is individual, but the similarities in emotional experience offer some insight into some common, shared experiences with the arts. No one category of emotion was unique to a particular community or one singular show.

“What emotions did you feel most intensely?” Patrons worked from their short-term, but perhaps not immediate memory of the event. Some might have answered the questionnaire while still buzzing with the excitement of the evening; some with the exhaustion that comes from driving home after a late night; some with the distance that comes from sleeping on the experience. Approximately two-thirds of the people who completed Part II of the *MUP Values and Impact Study* (n = 1,311) reported some qualitative emotional experience after their performance. We dropped 150 of these respondents because the shows they attended, *Mamma Mia!* And *Papa Tamahumara*, could not be categorized as a dance, music, or stage play performance, the types of interest in this project. This left us with a final sample size of 1,161 people. When we appropriately weight the data, our sample is about 40% of the original. Answers ranged from the somewhat predictable: “joy and happiness” or “awe and excitement” to the perhaps unexpected; “frustration, fear, intellectual, mystery.” The wide range of answers makes any comprehensive analysis difficult, as these were self-identified emotional responses. However these responses and the relationship between emotional response and other indicators of satisfaction and engagement in the surveys makes for some interesting correlations, relationships that can be valuable in programming and marketing arts events.

In all except one performance, less than half of the people reported emotional responses.<sup>2</sup> The majority of performances registered between 25-45% of audiences reporting an emotional response. There are more similarities than differences between people who report qualitative emotional response and those that do not when it comes to performance expectations and satisfaction. For the majority of the motivation, expectation, relevance, and satisfaction variables, there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups. This is important, because it suggests that people who did describe specific emotional experiences are similar to people who did not describe these experiences in some important ways. These were not a particularly select or special group of people in terms of the reasons they attended a show, their readiness to receive that performance, or their satisfaction with the production. While it is probable that there are differences between people who took the time to identify specific felt experiences and people who did not, for most of the measures relevant to this paper the two groups were overall very similar.

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<sup>2</sup> 52% of audiences surveyed at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet performance reported an emotional response. This was the only performance where a majority of audiences surveyed reported an emotional response.

**Table 1: Differences between patrons who did/did not report specific emotions**

	Reported Emotional Experience	Did Not Report Excitement Excitement
<b>Familiarity with Performer/Group</b> (mean reported familiarity)	2.10*	2.21
<b>Satisfaction: Impression Left in a Year</b> (mean reported impression)	3.76**	3.93

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

There are two exceptions. As we can see in Table 1, people who report qualitative emotional experiences have slightly less familiarity with the performer or group. This difference is statistically significant at the .05-level, meaning that there is a 95% chance that this difference holds true for the population of performing arts audiences. Patrons that report qualitative experiences also feel the performance will leave less of an impression than those who do not share qualitative experiences, although the magnitude of the difference is small (less than two-tenths of a point difference on average). These findings are a bit surprising, and challenge common sense ideas held by the researchers as to who would describe emotional experiences. We might expect people who are more familiar with a performer or group to feel more compelled to take the time to capture and record their emotional experiences. Similarly, we would not expect the identification of specific emotions to be associated with a lower average satisfaction. These findings, while unexpected, add strength to the idea that emotion is only one of many indicators of impact and that the performing arts work on many levels –emotional, intellectual, kinesthetic. While emotions are an important part of the effect of the performing arts, people do not necessarily rely on or anticipate emotions as an indicator of general impact.

### *Emotional Categorization*

Emotional categorization was the first step of our analysis. Both authors separately coded and organized emotional responses into categories. These categories were then compared. There was considerable overlap in our decisions, particularly in how we grouped some of the more common responses. Discrepancies were resolved by through discussion and referencing the work of Plutchik, Tan, and others.<sup>3</sup>

We grouped over 2000 emotional responses into ten categories. Responses to two of these categories, Joy and Dissatisfaction, were diverse enough to warrant further division into subcategories. We based our categorization of emotions primarily on Robert Plutchik’s multidimensional model of emotions as explained in *Emotions and Life*.<sup>4</sup> According to Plutchik, all humans have 8 primary emotions: Anger, Fear, Sadness, Disgust, Surprise, Joy,

<sup>3</sup> Emotions that warranted discussion included some of the more nebulous responses like “uncertainty”. We discussed whether uncertainty belonged in Fear or Thoughtfulness and concluded that we could not assume that uncertainty was fearful, but does indicate a level of intellectual questioning.

<sup>4</sup> Please see Appendix A for Plutchik’s emotion diagram

Anticipation (Inspiration)<sup>5</sup> and Acceptance. Other theorists have used different models of primary emotions, using anywhere from 3-11 primary emotions. All accepted models include fear, anger, sadness and joy/happiness as primary emotions.<sup>6</sup> We used supplemental research from *The Handbook of Emotions*, an edited collection of research on emotion, and our own intuition based on the available data to expand upon Plutchik's work. Plutchik's model is useful in that it includes secondary emotions as mixtures of primary emotions such as love as a combination of joy and acceptance and alarm as a combination of fear and surprise. It is with the idea of emotional combinations that we created and defined some of our categories. It is important to note that these categories represent emotional dimensions that include various degrees of reported intensity.

We feel compelled to confront some long-held assumptions about the nature of emotion. The obstinence of the Cartesian body/mind split continues to create a stubborn hierarchy of knowledge production in Western thought and the false dichotomy between reason and emotion continues to pervade daily living. In looking at the responses to the emotion questions on the *Impact Study* questionnaire, we can immediately see how simplistic thinking about a split between emotion and intellect is false. Emotion researcher Ed Tan has analyzed what he calls "aesthetic emotions" which are the emotions associated with aesthetic experience. According to Tan, the primary emotion elicited by an aesthetic experience is Interest. For Tan, Interest is more than a cognitive state in which "there is an emotion action tendency to spend attention and effort," indicating how inextricably intertwined emotion and cognition are. (120). In *Emotions and Life*, Plutchik also dissects the complexity of emotion, combating the assumption that emotions are fundamentally irrational and disconnected to cognitive processes. When asked for what emotions felt most intensely, many people indicate responses that might not necessarily be defined as emotions but are felt experiences that include a fundamental emotional component. Some responses reveal a cognitive or intellectual component such as confusion, skepticism or analyzing. This indicates that people have varied definitions of emotional response and that emotions cannot be separated from a cognitive or intellectual experience. For our purposes, all of these categories are complex in that any emotional experience carries with it a cognitive element of Interest. Interest is underlying all of the emotional categories except perhaps the Dissatisfaction category in which what is indicated is a lack of interest and therefore a sense of disengagement with the performance experience.

Categorizing emotions was a difficult task that necessarily included some assumptions made by the researchers. For example, we cannot necessarily distinguish between an emotion elicited by the work of art itself and an emotion elicited by a lack of connection to the work of art. For example, if someone responds that they feel "appalled", are they appalled by the quality of the experience or by the content of the piece? Furthermore, there were some extremely interesting responses that we could not fit into an appropriate category like "beauty". We had 33 responses of beauty as the emotion felt most intensely which is extremely interesting, but also extremely difficult to analyze. These complications admittedly constrain our ability to draw strong conclusions about emotional experiences associated with performances. They also highlight the importance of future

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<sup>5</sup> We have replaced Plutchik's description of Anticipation with Inspiration in order to better capture the nature of the emotional category.

<sup>6</sup> Theorist T. D. Kemper included satisfaction in his set of primary emotions. Considering that the *Impact Study* itself distinguishes between emotional response and satisfaction, this categorization is not useful.



research that provides more in depth understanding of patrons' reported emotional experiences, the meanings people embed in their reports, and how these relate to satisfaction with a performance.

### *Basic Emotion Categories*

Listed from largest number of responses to smallest, our categories<sup>7</sup> include:

**JOY:** As arts promoters might expect Joy is our largest category. As previously discussed, Joy is considered a primary human emotion by experts, an emotion we often associate with entertainment and the performing arts. Joy is a general description for a multi-dimensional experience. We created subcategories in an effort to capture and analyze the subtle differences in joyful responses. Our subcategories include: Happiness – the general feeling of joy, Excitement which includes a sense of heightened energy, Peace which includes a sense of centering or slowing of energy, and Sensuality which includes hints of erotic energy.

**AWE:** The second largest category we defined as a combination of two of Plutchik's primary emotions, joy and surprise. Examples of Awe include amazement, wonder and fascination. The performing arts often are marketed to a sense of wonder and awe. There is a sense of heightened emotion, emotion beyond what one experiences in their daily life.

**SADNESS:** Often we seek a cathartic experience while participating in arts events. We want to feel the longing of a Requiem or identify with Ophelia's loss. We seek an emotional release. Again, it is important to note that these categories represent emotional dimensions and while there is quite a difference between despair and discouraged, they are both dimensions of Sadness.

**DISSATISFACTION:** In the *MUP Values and Impact Study*, satisfaction is a state that encompasses emotion as only one of the components of a performance's impact on an audience member. Part of our research is to actually interrogate how emotion contributes to satisfaction or dissatisfaction and the relationship between emotion and other satisfaction indicators. However, many people indicated that the emotion that they felt most intensely was dissatisfaction. Therefore, we use the category of Dissatisfaction as an emotional state separate from the Satisfaction index. The descriptives listed in this category indicate dissatisfaction with the experience rather than an emotion elicited from engagement with the content of the arts experience. We broke this up into 2 subcategories: disappointment indicates unmet expectations while disengagement indicates boredom.

**APPRECIATION:** This category represents emotions that require complex cognitive responses to social or cultural factors. According to emotions researcher Michael Lewis, these are emotions in which "cognitive processes must be the elicitors of these complex emotions" (Lewis, 623). For example, pride "occurs when one makes a comparison or evaluates one's behavior vis-à-vis some standard, rule or goal and finds that one has succeeded" (623). Pride then requires an understanding of those enculturated standards, rules or goals. All of the responses in this category require an understanding of some enculturated standards.

**(SOCIAL) ACCEPTANCE:** We based this category on research by Nancy Eisenberg. It refers to emotions based on an awareness of the self in relation to others. Eisenberg focuses on empathy and sympathy that require the capacity to understand others' mental and emotional states. These emotions are inherently social and rely on an understanding of the connection of self to others.

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<sup>7</sup> See Appendix B for a comprehensive list of the emotional responses that comprise each category.

ANGER: One of Plutchik's primary emotions, this category only includes reports of anger elicited from the experience of participating in the arts event. While often considered unacceptable to express anger in public, arts events can actually elicit anger.

THOUGHTFULNESS: This category includes the felt experience of intellectual rigor. Many of these responses included a sense of teasing out the meaning of the experience, like confusion or curiosity. These are feeling states that include both an emotional and cognitive component. Regardless of whether they seem more cognitive than emotional, these were the terms people used to describe their most intense emotion.

FEAR: Also one of Plutchik's primary emotions, Fear includes a wide range of intensity from Apprehension to Horror.

INSPIRATION: This category indicates a sense of time, an understanding of the future. The responses included in this category are looking toward a positive future with hope.

Responses included hopefulness and freedom.

We are relying on verbal self-identified emotional responses. Considering the sheer number of descriptive words that we use in the English language to communicate various feelings, these responses are vast. As Robert Plutchik elucidates,

“A verbal report of an inner emotional state is only a rough approximation to whatever that state is. An emotion should not be considered as synonymous with a presumed inner feeling state. Instead it appears that the word *emotion* refers to a complex set of events whose characteristics can only be inferred on the basis of congruence of various classes of evidence” (17).

This warning seems to indicate that any sort of research involving self-report is inherently flawed. However it is equally true that “self-report is our only access to motivational changes and action tendencies as well as the subjective feeling state” (Wallbott, Sherer 57). It is important also to interrogate how people talk about their emotions. What emotions are acceptable to talk about? For example, dance is often marketed as sensual, but very few people reported a feeling of sensuality. Perhaps people are uncomfortable talking about the feeling of sensuality or people are not experiencing the sensuality of the event. It might not be useful to invoke the sensuality of a performance.

#### *Establishing the Role of Emotional Experience*

Our main variables of interest are the emotion categories variables were constructed from qualitative reports of felt experiences in the survey. We are particularly interested in the relationship between these experiences and the expectations people bring to a production, their motivation for attendance, the relevance of the show to their performance preferences, and their reported satisfaction with the show. By focusing on the ways reported emotions relate to these factors, we can begin to understand the role of emotions as a part of the process of consuming the performing arts.

Our analysis relies on comparison of means and comparison of proportions tests to understand how specific emotions fit into the overall experience of performing arts attendance. These tests help us establish statistically significant differences between people who report a particular emotional experience and people who do not report that experience, but do describe other emotions in a way that easily conveys information. We ran comparison tests on motivation, relevance, expectation, and satisfaction variables<sup>8</sup> for each of the sixteen

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix C for a comprehensive list of the variables we included in our analysis.

experiences we identified. To discuss the relationships of each of these would be long and tedious, as many were not statistically significant. We instead focus on those associations that produce consistent narratives about audience felt experiences.

Most of the tests consider an individual item, such as familiarity with a group or attending a performance for an intellectual experience, as the key variable of interest. However, we also construct two different scales of satisfaction to help capture how emotions relate to overall satisfaction with a production. The first includes all the satisfaction variables *except* sat5 (“Was the performance worth the investment?”), which on a Chombach's alpha test loads the lowest of all the variables; the second includes all 6 satisfaction variables. The first scale averages (mean) the scores of the satisfaction questions, and substitutes the mean of the scores for any questions unanswered. The second employs standardized scores for the satisfaction variables. The technique used to create the scale does not impact the statistical story we can tell. Since there is no difference in the associations we see between the two scales, we use the first scale – the one that excludes the investment question – in our discussion here. As an unstandardized variable, it is easier to compare and explain differences in satisfaction by emotional experience in a meaningful way.

It is important to emphasize that the comparison tests we use, while providing interesting and thought provoking narratives, do not establish causal relationships. They are the first step towards a stronger, causal argument about the role of emotions in the consumption of the performing arts, but they are only descriptive and suggestive, painting picture of some of the dimensions of these experiences. We try to keep this in mind as we interpret the results and construct a story of audience’s emotional experiences.

## RESULTS

### *Demographics of Specific Emotional Experiences*

Table 2 shows the percentage of men and women that report a particular emotional experience. We can see that women are more likely to report feelings of acceptance during a performance than man, at the .05 level. Men, however, are more likely to report feelings of thoughtfulness and joy, particularly peace, than women, at the .05 level. There are no other statistically significant differences in emotional experiences by gender.

**Table 2: Sex Differences in Specific Emotional Experiences**

(proportion of men/women reporting emotions)

	women	men
Acceptance	0.0936*	0.0511
Anger	0.0469	0.0420
Appreciation	0.0866	0.0915
Awe	0.1803	0.1406
Dissatisfaction	0.1138	0.1251
Disappointment	0.0581	0.0767
Disengagement	0.0582	0.0537
Fear	0.0614	0.0389
Inspiration	0.0851	0.0588
Joy	0.4785	0.5678*
Excitement	0.0924	0.1123
Happiness	0.4014	0.4468
Peace	0.0270	0.0579*
Sensuality	0.0257	0.0481
Sadness	0.1085	0.1149
Thought	0.0608	0.1026*
<b>N (weighted)</b>	<b>505.89218</b>	<b>278.10782</b>

\* significant at 5%

Table 3 shows the percentage of reported experiences by type of performance: dance, music, or stage play. Dance audiences are much more likely to report feelings of inspiration and acceptance than music or stage play audiences. About 12% of dance audiences report feelings of acceptance, compared to 6.5% and 7% of music or stage play audiences respectively.

**Table 3: Genre Differences in Specific Emotional Experiences**

(proportion of genre audiences reporting emotions)

	dance	music	stage play
Acceptance	0.1191*	0.0646	0.0689
Anger	0.0499	0.0552	0.0261
Appreciation	0.0956	0.0868	0.0755
Awe	0.1558	0.1807	0.1770
Dissatisfaction	0.0772***	0.1837	0.0771
Disappointment	0.0434**	0.1045	0.0525
Disengagement	0.0365**	0.0865	0.0285
Fear	0.0440	0.0764	0.0075**
Inspiration	0.1087*	0.0679	0.0461
Joy	0.5375	0.4060***	0.5786
Excitement	0.1533	0.0834**	0.1503
Happiness	0.4206	0.3010***	0.4624
Peace	0.0199	0.0335	0.0586
Sensuality	0.0225	0.0431	0.0339
Sadness	0.1327	0.1503	0.1038
Thought	0.0437	0.1013***	0.0567
<b>N (weighted)</b>	<b>308.64769</b>	<b>583.37503</b>	<b>262.97728</b>

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at .1%

Music patrons are more likely to report feelings of thoughtfulness than dance or stage play audiences. Ten percent of music audiences described feeling intellectually engaged by a performance, while only 4% of dance audiences and 6% of stage play audiences express similar feelings. Music audiences, however, were less likely to say they experienced joy, and more specifically excitement and happiness, during a production than their dance and stage play counterparts. Like audiences of other types of performances, joy is the most reported emotion among music patrons. However, only 40% of this audience describes joy, compared to over half of the people who attended dance or stage play productions. They were also more likely to report feeling dissatisfied with a performance. Over 18% of these patrons reported feeling disappointed and or disengaged with the show. This is significantly greater than the 8% of dance and stage play audiences who also describe dissatisfaction.

There are two possible explanations for these numbers. The easiest, and perhaps most troubling for arts promoters, is also the simplest: The music shows included in the *MUP Value and Impact* study just did not meet the expectations of their audience, or were unable to keep them engaged. This is certainly suggested by fewer reports of joy and more reports of dissatisfaction among music audiences.

We offer an alternative explanation, one that we will build through the rest of our analysis. While we cannot argue that a smaller percentage of music audiences felt joy, this difference cannot be explained by audience dissatisfaction alone. The difference in reports of joy between music patrons and dance/stage play patrons is larger than the difference in reported dissatisfaction between these groups. This means that music audiences are more likely to report emotional experiences *other* than joy. It may be that music productions provide a space for people to enjoy different emotional experiences.

### *Specific Emotional Experiences*

We now turn our attention to the relationship between our emotional categories and performance expectations and satisfaction. There are statistically significant relationships for each of our emotion categories with different expectation and satisfaction variables. Some of the stories, however, are more compelling. We focus on those categories that yielded some of the most interesting and fruitful results for programming and marketing arts events.

Our research suggests that the experienced arts patron often enters the theatre with the intention to have a particular emotional experience and is satisfied when they achieve that feeling state. Often the emotional experience sought is a heightened state that goes beyond the emotions felt in everyday life. It also seems that people may attend performances in order to experience emotions that might be considered negative or inappropriate in other social settings, emotions such as anger, fear and sadness.

**JOY:** Perhaps the most intuitive and expected response to arts experience is joy. We assume that the arts entertain, and in entertaining, they bring joy. But what is the impact of a joyful experience? Does experiencing joy mean that an audience member leaves the theatre feeling satisfied with the experience? Is joy what people want when they participate in arts events?

Our discussion of joy focuses on happiness and excitement. There were few statistical associations between expectations, satisfaction, and peace or sensuality. This may be due in part to the fact that happiness and excitement are more common emotions than peacefulness and sensuality. The lack of responses in these latter categories makes it difficult to see if variation in emotional experience is associated with our variables of interest.

As we see in Table 4, people who attend performances to broaden their own cultural horizons or enjoy an intellectual experience are more likely to report feeling excitement during a production. About 75% of people who reported feeling excited during a show went to culturally expand themselves, while 63% of those who did not report excitement attended for the same reason. Likewise, 63% of the “excited” went with the desire for an intellectual experience, while only 48% of the “unexcited” had the same motivation. Patrons who are likely to attend similar performances, however, are less likely to describe an emotional experience of excitement; 37% of the “excited” were highly likely to go to similar shows said they felt excited. About half of the patrons who did not describe excitement were likely to attend other, similar productions. This suggests that excitement is associated with self improvement through novelty, pushing one’s intellectual and cultural boundaries with a new experience.

**Table 4: Factors Associated with Excitement**

	<b>Reported Excitement</b> (proportion)	<b>Did Not Report Excitement</b> (proportion)	<b>t</b>
<b>Motivation: Culturally Expand Self</b>	0.7469	0.6273	(2.96)**
<b>Motivation: Intellectual Experience</b>	0.6290	0.4800	(3.35)***
<b>Relevance: Highly Likely to Attend Similar Performances</b>	0.3743	0.5015	(3.31)***

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test. Absolute value of t statistics in parentheses.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

We see a similar story with happiness in Table 5. Being unfamiliar with a performer or performance group significantly increases the likelihood of people reporting feelings of happiness. Of those people who were happy during a show, 58% were unfamiliar with the performer or group but 46% of those who reported something other than happiness were also unfamiliar. The importance of performance in one’s life significantly shapes the chances one will say they felt happy during a show, with 41% of the “happy” and 48% of the “unhappy” saying performance was very important in their lives. Also, if one believes their peers are very likely to attend a show they are less likely to describe an emotional experience of happiness (19% versus 24%).

The data suggest that people who are repeat performance consumers may not return because a show made them feel happy. They may in fact return because the production provided an opportunity to enjoy a less common emotional experience. It seems that the emotional experiences of audience members, in these cases, extend beyond the show itself to the entire experience of being an arts consumer.

**Table 5: Factors Associated with Happiness**

	<b>Reported Happiness</b> (proportion)	<b>Did Not Report Happiness</b> (proportion)	<b>t</b>
<b>Expectation: Unfamiliar with Performance Group</b>	0.5724	0.4640	(3.87)***
<b>Relevance: Performance is Very Important in my Life</b>	0.4129	0.4795	(2.39)**
<b>Relevance: Peers are Very Likely to Attend Show</b>	0.1868	0.2409	(2.35)**

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test. Absolute value of t statistics in parentheses.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

Perhaps most surprising, however, is the fact that feeling joy during a show does not translate to higher levels of satisfaction. In fact as we see in Table 6, people that report feelings of joy actually report less satisfaction with a production. This is true for our satisfaction scale, as well as four of the six satisfaction questions. Patrons who report joy gave lower ratings to the quality of the performers (average rating of 4.50 compared to 4.62) and the production design (average rating of 3.98 compared to 4.24) than those who reported other emotions. They were also less likely to feel the show met their expectations (3.82 compared to 4.04) or would have as strong an impact in a year (3.67 compared to 4.86). The magnitude of these effects is not particularly strong, reducing the average rating by one-tenth to one-quarter of a point, so we should not think that people who leave performances feeling joy are also unsatisfied with their experience. But they are not as satisfied as people who report feeling something other than joy. It may be that joy is a familiar and common emotion, something that most people are able to experience everyday. The performing arts, as a space that facilitates emotional experiences, may leave less of an impact when the provided experiences that we feel in our daily life.

**Table 6: Joy and Satisfaction**

	<b>Reported Joy</b>	<b>Did Not Report Joy</b>	<b>t</b>
<b>Mean Satisfaction with the Quality of the Performers</b>	4.50	4.62	(2.14)*
<b>Mean Satisfaction with the Quality of the Design</b>	3.98	4.24	(3.45)***
<b>Mean Level of Fulfilled Expectations</b>	3.82	4.04	(2.53)**
<b>Mean Expected Impression Left in 1 Year</b>	3.67	3.86	(1.94)*
<b>Mean Overall Satisfaction</b>	4.06	4.23	(2.80)**

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test. Absolute value of t statistics in parentheses.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

To summarize, joy – particularly happiness and excitement – is the most common felt experience patrons report. People are more likely to report these feelings when they step outside of their safety zone, and actively seek to challenge their cultural and intellectual boundaries. But despite the frequency with which audiences experience this emotion, it is not associated with greater satisfaction with a production. In fact, patrons that report any other emotional experience will also report greater satisfaction, on average.

**ANGER:** Anger offers an interesting comparison to joy. Unlike joy, anger is often considered a negative or inappropriate emotion to express in social situations. This is partially reflected in the *MUP Value and Impact Study* in how few people report feeling anger. Just over 5% of patrons in the sample describe this type of emotion. However, as we see in Table 7 and 8, our analysis suggests anger is not necessarily a bad experience for performing arts audiences.

**Table 7: Factors Associated with Anger**

	<b>Reported Anger</b> (proportion)	<b>Did Not Report Anger</b> (proportion)	<b>t</b>
<b>Motivation: Emotional Experience</b>	0.5344	0.3815	(2.39)**
<b>Expectation: Previously Attended Show by Performer(s)</b>	0.3710	0.2566	(1.86)*
<b>Relevance: Very Likely to Attend Similar Performances</b>	.6029	0.4827	(1.91)*

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test. Absolute value of t statistics in parentheses.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

First, there is significant relationship between previous attendance and anger. Patrons who had previously seen the performer or performance group were more likely to report anger than those who had never seen the group. Thirty-seven percent of audience members who said they felt angry were repeat consumers. Only 27% of those who did not report anger had previously attended. A greater proportion of patrons describing anger also said they were very likely to attend similar performances (60%) compared to those who did not report anger (48%). And when one of the driving motivations to see a production is to have an emotional experience, we see a large increase in the likelihood of describing an emotional experience of Anger (53% versus 38%, respectively).

Now, it may be that the anger people profess to feel is a negative thing: anger that the show did not meet expectations, that the audience was let down by a performer or group that had previously given them a fulfilling show. If this were the case, we would expect audience overall satisfaction with a production to be lower for those who experienced anger than those who did not. Yet these experiences with anger actually increase the average audience report of satisfaction (see Table 8). Patrons who felt angry during a production had an average satisfaction scale rate of 4.4, while those who did not experience anger had an average rate of 4.1. Experiences of anger had a particularly strong, positive association with the reported satisfaction with the performers and production design. These associations imply that the anger people experienced was not over a perceived poor production, but a



response elicited by the piece itself. It is worth noting that anger is the only emotional experience with a statistically significant, positive relationship with our satisfaction scale for a production.

**Table 8: Anger and Satisfaction**

	<b>Reported Anger</b>	<b>Did Not Report Anger</b>	<b>T</b>
<b>Mean Overall Satisfaction</b>	4.41	4.13	(2.46)**

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test. Absolute value of t statistics in parentheses.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

Individually, these associations are small in magnitude and do not offer much of a picture of audience experiences with anger. But combined they suggest the performing arts provide a space that enables socially acceptable experiences of anger. It may be that patrons consciously select productions they know will make them angry. It is more likely that, within the context of the performing arts venue, people are able to have an emotional experience of anger without the social stigma or consequences of such an experience. Perhaps the arts, then, provide a safe space to feel aggression and anger where it is directed not at a person or personal situation but at a work of art, something removed from daily life.

**FEAR:** Audiences' reported experiences with fear, illustrated in Tables 9 and 10, are similar to those with anger. Almost twice as many people who reported fear went for an emotional experience than those who did not report fear. The desire to have an emotional experience, then, again seems to increase the chances of having a particular type of felt experience. This suggests that these patrons may come into the performance more open to having that (or simply some kind of) felt experience. Socially motivated attendance, spending time with the people in one's party, decreased the likelihood of describing fear. While 37% of people who reported feeling afraid said they came to spend time with others in their party, 59% of those who did not describe fear came with the same intention. This adds support to the idea that, to have a significant experience with fear, audience members must have a particular approach to performance. While it may not be conscious, patrons position themselves to be more or less likely to have certain emotional events at a show.

**Table 9: Factors Associated with Fear**

	<b>Reported Fear</b> (proportion)	<b>Did Not Report Fear</b> (proportion)	<b>t</b>
<b>Motivation: Emotional Experience</b>	0.6261	0.3785	(3.75)***
<b>Motivation: Spend Time with Party</b>	0.3694	0.5916	(3.37)***

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test. Absolute value of t statistics in parentheses.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

Fear also has a statistically significant, positive association with patrons reported satisfaction with the quality of the performers (see Table 10). Audience members who experienced fear had an average satisfaction level of 4.80, compared to 4.54 among those who did not experience fear. Such positive appraisal implicitly recognizes fear as a positive experience in the context of the performing arts. It is a product of a job well done.

**Table 10: Fear and Satisfaction**

	Reported Fear	Did Not Report Fear	t
<b>Mean Satisfaction with the Quality of the Performers</b>	4.80	4.54	(3.36)***

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test. Absolute value of t statistics in parentheses.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

On its own, the story of fear is weak, based on only a few significant relationships. But it mirrors the findings of anger. Audiences come to these shows with the intention of being emotionally moved, and report higher levels of satisfaction having had an emotional experience that is commonly constructed to be negative or inappropriate in other social settings. Emotional experiences in the arts are like Alice through the Looking Glass. “Positive” emotions, like joy, come from outside that which is familiar, and offer less satisfying experiences than “negative” emotions like anger and fear.

**INSPIRATION:** Most of the emotional experiences people described were not associated with more or less satisfaction with a performance. These other experiences, however, were shaped by social factors outside of the performance itself. Feelings of inspiration are a good example and are shown in Table 11. Art’s ability to inspire is a common belief held by its advocates. The *MUPS Value and Impact Study* provides an opportunity to better understand the conditions that increase the likelihood audiences can enjoy this experience.

The reasons one attends a performance, what they hope to get out of the show, can play a role in the likelihood that one later reports feeling inspired. About 63% of people who felt inspired attended the show to be intellectually stimulated. Only 49% of people that did not describe inspiration attended for the same reason. This suggests that going to the performing arts to have an intellectual experience increases the chances that someone will leave having an inspired felt-experience. The desire to celebrate one’s cultural heritage has a similar affect. It was a driving motivation for about 20% of people that felt inspired, and only 11% of those who did not feel inspired. Attending a show to spend time with one’s party, however, reduces the likelihood that one will have an emotional experience of inspiration. Nearly 60% of patrons who do not report feeling inspired came to spend time with their party, while only 45% of those describing inspiration came with this social goal in mind.

**Table 11: Factors Associated with Inspiration**

	<b>Reported Inspiration</b> (proportion)	<b>Did Not Report Inspiration</b> (proportion)	<b>t</b>
<b>Motivation: Intellectual Experience</b>	0.6372	0.4845	(2.88)**
<b>Motivation: Celebrate Heritage</b>	0.1955	0.1132	(1.91)*
<b>Motivation: Spend Time with Party</b>	0.4469	0.5905	(2.23)*
<b>Relevance: Performance is Very Important in my Life</b>	0.5893	0.4419	(2.73)**
<b>Relevance: Peers are Likely to Attend Show</b>	0.3234	0.2110	(2.20)*

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test. Absolute value of t statistics in parentheses.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

The centrality of a performance in the lives of patrons also mediated the likelihood of experiencing inspiration. Almost 60% of the “inspired” saw performance as “Very important” in their lives, while only 44% of the “uninspired” said the same thing. We see a similar relationship when look at the perception that peers are likely to attend a show. Thirty-two percent of people reporting inspiration also said their peers were likely to attend the production. Only 21% of people who did not report inspiration thought their peers would also see the show.

Inspiration, then, seems to be a very personal emotional experience, one connected to private growth and distracted by immediate social interaction. It is also an experience associated with audiences we might consider “committed consumers”: people whose identity is constructed in part around the consumption of the arts, and who are part of social groups that also attend the same productions. It is impossible to tease out if inspiration is a product of situating performance as a central part of one’s identity and social networks, or if it in fact produces this identity and these networks. Such a question would be better answered by future research. What our analysis does reveal is how these “committed consumers” describe the feelings produced by a performance, the language they may use in their everyday life to describe and informally promote works they have seen.

**DISSATISFACTION:** The final reported emotion we will discuss is dissatisfaction, as seen in Table 12. Reported feelings of overall dissatisfaction seem to be shaped by expectations audience members bring to the performance. A greater proportion of respondents who report dissatisfaction had also previously attended one or more shows by the performer or group, compared to those who were not dissatisfied (about 36% and 25%, respectively). The same dynamic is true when we look at audience pre-show confidence that they would enjoy the performance. It may be these people come into a performance with expectations that cannot be met. Likewise, people who attended a performance in order to be spiritually moved had higher instances of reporting dissatisfaction. Of those who were dissatisfied, about 27% came to be spiritually renewed. Only 19% of those who were not dissatisfied attended for the same reason. Having a spiritual experience in a performance is a

tall order that is difficult to satisfy. In terms of marketing, invoking spirituality might create unrealistic expectations for audiences.

**Table 12: Factors Associated with Dissatisfaction**

	<b>Reported Dissatisfaction (proportion)</b>	<b>Did Not Report Dissatisfaction (proportion)</b>	<b>t</b>
<b>Motivation: Spiritual Renewal</b>	0.2664	0.1945	(2.00)*
<b>Expectation: Previously Attended Show by Performer(s)</b>	0.3586	0.2480	(2.84)**
<b>Expectations: Confident I will Enjoy Show</b>	0.9437	0.8611	(3.93)***

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test. Absolute value of t statistics in parentheses.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

Disengagement, as a specific type of dissatisfied experience, was similarly related to expectations audiences may bring to a show. Looking at Table 13 we see that patrons who were disengaged during a performance were more likely to have been very familiar with either the group or the repertoire being performed. The desire to culturally expand one's horizons, however, is associated with few instances of reported disengagement. While half of those patrons who were felt disengaged attended for personal cultural growth, nearly 65% of those who were engaged attended for the same reason. The consistent importance of expectations people hold when they come to a performance suggests that overall impact would be best served by marketing shows in a way that encourages people to come with an open mind, leaving pre-conceived beliefs at the door.

**Table 13: Factors Associated with Disengagement**

	<b>Reported Disengagement (proportion)</b>	<b>Did Not Report Disengagement (proportion)</b>	<b>t</b>
<b>Motivation: Culturally Expand Self</b>	0.4998	0.6470	(2.37)**
<b>Expectation: Very Familiar with Performance Group</b>	0.2038	0.0775	(2.53)**
<b>Expectations: Very Familiar with Repertoire</b>	0.2072	0.1097	(1.91)*

Significance based on 1-tailed t-test. Absolute value of t statistics in parentheses.

\* significant at 5%; \*\* significant at 1%; \*\*\* significant at 0.1%

There is some question about the validity of these findings, however. Qualitative reports of dissatisfaction were not statistically significantly associated with low scores on the satisfaction variables. In other words, the described felt experience of dissatisfaction did not change how highly people rated their overall satisfaction with a show. This is counter intuitive, and begs the question why there is a gap between the descriptive and numeric

responses people give in terms of satisfaction. One possible explanation is that the numeric satisfaction variables are not a good measure of overall satisfaction. The alternative explanation is that qualitative reports of dissatisfaction capture a different aspect of satisfaction than those captured by the close ended questions. Perhaps *feeling* dissatisfied during a show is different than *being* dissatisfied after.

## CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis shows that the more intensely felt the emotion was, regardless of the emotion, whether it was joy, anger, sadness or even contemplation, the more satisfied the audience member tended to be. People are more satisfied with a performance if it takes them to a heightened emotional place rather than an emotional place that they might consider ordinary. Our research also suggests that people may attend arts events with the intent of having a particular emotional experience such as feeling anger or fear and then are satisfied with the experience when they feel that emotion. The more familiar or comfortable an audience member is with a particular performance experience, the more likely they are to seek out specific emotional experiences, often seeking to experience emotions like anger or fear that are considered negative or inappropriate in other social situations. The relationship between high levels of satisfaction and reports of anger and fear suggest that experiencing these emotions is not negative and that participating in performing arts events provides a space to feel these emotions. Arts educators advocate for arts in education because the arts provide an expressive outlet, a way for children to release energy and express themselves in a positive way. Watching performing arts events can have a similar effect, providing arts patrons with a means to feel intensely, and the intensity of feeling is what is important, even if that feeling is anger, sadness or fear. The emotion itself is less important than the quality of that emotion. The problematic aspect of this information in terms of marketing is the correlation between unmet expectations and dissatisfaction. Arts organizations do not want to set up false emotional expectations with marketing materials that can never be met.

It does not seem that experienced arts patrons are invested in feeling joy. In fact, the more comfortable the person is with the artist or genre, the least likely they are to report feeling happy and the more likely they are to report feeling sad and sensual, again emotions that might be inappropriate to express in other social settings.

Attending an arts event is both a singular experience while it is also inherently social. The feeling of collectivity in an audience influences one's individual experience. Therefore there is a complex relationship between social desires and emotional experiences. Going to a show with the intention of spending time with those one came with decreases the likelihood of reporting several emotional experiences; inspiration, appreciation, awe and fear. It seems that people who come into the theatre with social intentions are less likely to seek out or experience the depth of emotion than those who have more individual goals such as broadening one's cultural knowledge or celebrating one's cultural heritage. Though immediate social desires seem to dilute the emotional experience, going to a show to see people outside one's immediate party actually increases the likelihood of reporting Joy. Perhaps the social goals in this case make people feel good about the experience. This information could be useful for marketing and fundraising efforts in which specific communities are targeted. Perhaps specific shows can be marketed for their social aspects, shows that are highly entertaining in the traditional sense, bringing people happiness or excitement. Shows that are pleasant and entertaining, but might not be highly emotional might be great shows for group sales, date nights and networking events. It is interesting that dance, as a nonverbal form, is the form that invokes high instances of acceptance, feelings

that are inherently social. Perhaps highlighting the social nature of dance through marketing materials or through enhancement events could prove a useful experiment given this research.

Our research reiterates some of the findings of the *MUP Values and Impact Study*, primary that audience reception is incredibly complex and emotional resonance cannot be completely separated from other response paradigms, such as intellectual stimulations and social bonding. Emotions are influenced and created by those paradigms. The Impact Study found that audiences want to be drawn into a performance and suggests that presenters facilitate ways for audiences to achieve a state of “Flow”. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of Flow is an energized experiential state in which one achieves effortless in an intensity of focus. Intensity is the operative word here, and our research also suggests that intensity of emotion is a factor that can lead to a state of “Flow” or at least to a state of satisfaction. Where the implications of our research might complicate the findings of the Impact Study is in the idea of creating anticipation. The Impact Study Summary states that “The data suggest that presenters should focus more on pre-performance engagement strategies in order to create higher levels of anticipation before the performance. Such engagement strategies are strongly indicated as a means of increasing anticipation, which leads to heightened levels of captivation and, therefore, the full range of impacts.” Our data similarly suggests that people who enter the theatre anticipating an emotional experience and achieve that experience are satisfied. However, the research also suggests that if they have expectations that are not met by the experience, then they leave dissatisfied. The complexity then for presenters is to create a means for anticipation that does not create unattainable expectations. We agree with the Impact Study report in the importance of messaging effectively and honestly about the impacts that the performance is likely to have.

Ultimately, this research is just the start of an effort to understand the role that emotions play in audience reception. This research doesn’t provide conclusions so much as further questions, but it does indicate the importance of intrinsic experience and the degree to which emotions play a significant part in that intrinsic experience. Further studies can be conducted with bigger samples and more in depth emotional questioning. We have learned that emotions play a significant role in determining satisfaction and impact and that emotional intensity is a goal for many arts patrons. The entirety of the audience experience, from their pre-conceived notions entering the theatre to their post-show musings, contributes to their emotional response, and therefore contributes to impact. Because no single performance genre is exclusively correlated with any one category of emotion, this research supports the idea that emotion and by extension, specific intrinsic value is not bound by genre, but by the quality of the experience.

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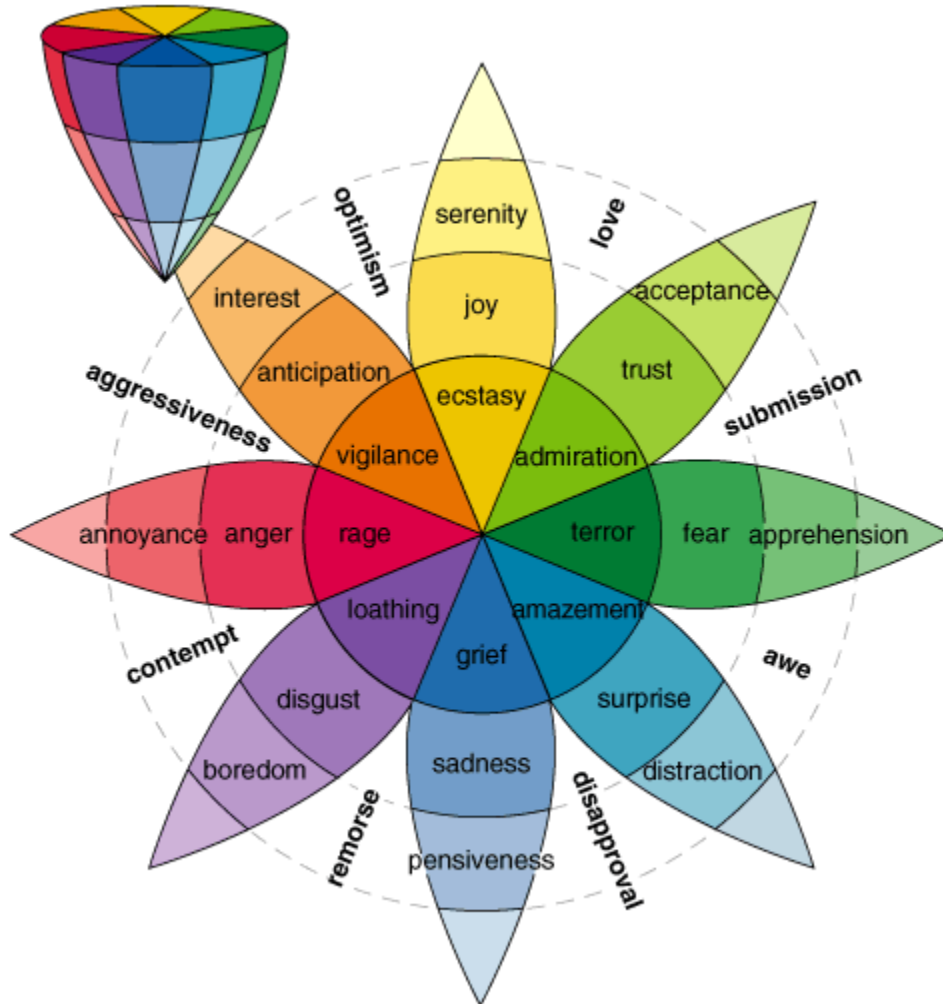
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## APPENDIX A

Robert Plutchik's Model of Human Emotion: The three-dimensional model shows the relationship between emotions with the intensity of emotion radiating outward from the center. The emotions in the blank space represent emotions that are combinations or mixtures of primary emotions.





## APPENDIX B - Emotional Responses and Emotion Categories

### ANGER

Jealousy	5
Anger	55
Outrage	3
Appalled	1
Animosity	1
Contempt	2
Envy	4
conflict	2

**Total** 73

### INSPIRATION

Hopefulness	22
Uplifting	23
Motivating	1
Inspired	18
Spiritual	27
Transcendence	1
Liberated	1
Freedom	5
Reverence	3
Encouragement	2
Anticipation	3
empowered	1

**Total** 107

### FEAR

Fear	20
Worry	3
suspense	1
Horror	3
Stress	6
Anxiety	11
Concern	3
distress	1
foreboding	1
uneasy	1
trepidation	1
apprehension	1
disturbed	3

**Total** 55

### APPRECIATION

Admiration	48
Pride	24
Respect	9
Gratitude	9
Appreciation	38
validation	1

**Total** 129

### DISSATISFACTION

Frustration	55
Exasperation	2
Irritation	3
Cheated	1
Annoyance	8
Disappointed	25
Dissatisfied	1

Disappointment

Boredom	31
Drifting	1
Apathy	2
Disconnection	3
Fatigue	9
Detachment	2
Restless	1
Restlessness	1
Distraction	2
Disdain	2
repulsion	4
Disgust	7
Alienation	2
dislike	2
defensive	1

Disengagement

**Total** 165

**AWE**

Awe	109
Wonder	44
Surprise	14
Fascination	10
Disbelief	4
Astonishment	2
Wow	1
Incredulity	1
incredulous	1
Impressed	10
marvel	1
Shock	2
Amazement	50
Enthralled	2
Enchantment	4
Entrancing	2
captivated	1
absorbed	1
mesmerized	1

**Total 249****SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE**

Compassion	11
support	1
Empathy	38
Sympathy	17
Pity	11
Connectedness	15
Belonging	2
Unfairness	1
inclusion	1
forgiveness	1
Attachment	5
Sense of unity	2
Touched	3
pathos	2

**Total 110****JOY**

Joy	208
Happiness	105
Cheerful	2
Delight	23
Gaiety	1
Lighthearted	1
Enjoyment	55
Amusement	27
Laughter	2
Entertainment	9
Humor	69
Pleasure	70
love	16
contentment	3
charmed	3
satisfaction	19
warmth	1

**Happiness**

Exhilaration	21
Excitement	80
Energy	25
Invigorating	3
Enthusiasm	6
Exuberance	2
stimulated	3
vitality	2
Jubilation	5
Elated	13
celebration	1
alive	2

**Excitement**

Erotic	5
Passion	24
sensual	6
lust	4
Desire	4
tenderness	3
romantic	1

**Sensuality**

Calm	4
Serenity	8
Bliss	2
Comfort	3
Tranquility	1
Peace	13
Relaxation	14
Harmony	1
focused	2
Reflective	6
Fulfilled	1
Well being	2

**Peace****Total 881**

**SADNESS**

Sadness	97
Depression	5
Sorrow	20
Melancholy	3
Despair	2
despondent	1
Hopelessness	1
longing	7
yearning	1
defeat	1
discouraged	1
Regret	6
suffering	1
Grief	4
Pain	6
Solemnity	1
Tragedy	3
Loneliness	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>

**THOUGHTFULNESS**

Confusion	39
Puzzlement	10
Curiosity	27
Bewilderment	3
Questioning	4
Uncertainty	2
Analyzing	1
pensive	1
intrigue	2
intellectual	4
Skeptical	1
challenged	1
mystery	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>

## **APPENDIX C – Variables of Interest**

attend – a recode of attart (previous attendance variable)  
perfart – familiarity with repertoire  
famart – familiarity with performer/performance group  
attdisc – likelihood of attending similar performances  
attlive – how integral performance is in one’s life  
fitin – peers attend performance  
cultid1 – performance falls within cultural comfort zone  
reason1, reason2, reason3, reason4, reason5, reason6, reason7, reason8 – motivation variables  
(reasons people chose to attend performance)  
sat1 – how good was the material?  
sat2 – satisfaction with quality of performers  
sat3 – satisfaction with quality of design  
sat4 – how fulfilled were expectations  
sat5 – worth the investment  
sat6 – impression left in one year  
Satisfy – composite scale using sat1, sat2, sat3, sat4, and sat6 (see Methods section, page 8 for a  
discussion of this variable)