

COPLAND PHILLIP GLASS

The Beatles

QUEEN

Ella Fitzgerald

Sweeney Todd

Bob Dylan

ADAMS

STAYING POWER

Does your collection of favorite recordings include *Mass in D* by Ethel Smyth? What about Johann Christian Ludwig Abeille's *Grand Concerto* for piano duet? Maybe Robert Fayrfax's *Missa O quam glorifica*? Anything by Antonio Capuzzi, William Billings, Jakob Friedrich Kleinknecht or Ignaz Vitzthumb? Probably not. Works by these composers and a long list of forgotten others have mostly disappeared in the rearview mirror. Why do we still perform and listen to works by Felix Mendelssohn, but not so much those of his equally talented sister Fanny? Why do we love Hector Berlioz, but know little of Gaspare Spontini, whom Berlioz greatly admired? Said Napoleon, "Glory is fleeting, obscurity is forever."

This got us to thinking, what are we listening to now that will stand the test of time? What music will still be on the radar of music lovers in 100 or 200 years? We decided to ask some of our favorite musicians, composers, patrons and music writers to tell us what contemporary music they think will survive the decades (we are defining "contemporary" as anything written after World War II). Here's what they told us:

J. Mark Scarsee, composer

Well, since Good Music is Scarsee – I mean scarce – I have to believe my own will move a soul or two a hundred years after I am gone, or what is it all for? In fact, I have to believe that every time I approach *The Blank White Page* or else it doesn't get filled!

But other than my own music, 100 years from now, we will still listen to: Stravinsky and Shostakovich, Barber and Britten, Berg and Bernstein, Copland and Messiaen, but also John Corigliano, John Adams, George Crumb, Bright Sheng, James MacMillan, Steve Reich, Morten Lauridsen and Eric Whitacre. Our own Karel Husa's *Music for Prague 1968* will be played as emblematic of the turbulent 20th century as long as there are bands and orchestras to play it.

But I started out as a jazz trumpeter, so I am sure we will also listen to: Miles, Monk, Dizzy, Bird, Clifford, Trane, Horace, Ornette, Mingus, Chick, Herbie, Zappa, Bill Evans, Gil Evans, Stan Getz and all those immortal singers – Ella, Frank, Sammy, Dino, Etta, Eartha, Johnny, Nina, Nneena, Ethel, Tony, Sarah, Joe, Dinah, Nat King Cole. It is impossible for me to consider a future where Joe Zawinul's "A Remark You Made" from Weather Report's classic *Heavy Weather* album of 1978 does not best express one hundred years of solitude two hundred years from now.

Erik Dyke, North Carolina Symphony double bass

Phillip Glass is fascinating. His opera *Christopher Columbus in the New World* and his violin concerto are mesmerizing.

Jennifer Higdon, composer

Anything that the Beatles wrote and performed. It's amazing to me that even though those songs were written more than forty years ago, they still sound relevant and engaging. I see teenagers today responding to their music, even when they don't know who The Beatles are!

I'm beginning to suspect that *Blue Cathedral* might be my one work that lasts in the symphonic repertoire for many, many years. A composer writes a piece,

assuming that there will be a premiere but not knowing how that work will fare in the world beyond (usually, works don't get done again beyond the premiere). But this little piece continues to build momentum, having now been done by more than 250 orchestras since its 2000 debut. And the bookings continue to be strong!

Dr. Robert Lacin, North Carolina Symphony Board of Trustees
Definitely The Beatles!

Brian Reagin, North Carolina Symphony concertmaster

Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, because it's exciting and because I'm going to keep playing it until I get it perfect, which will probably take another hundred years!

Roy C. Dicks, music writer

John Adams continues to be a successful and respected composer, but his masterpiece is his 1987 *Nixon in China*, notable for its driving rhythms and rich textures, as well as for the poetic treatment of its historical subject matter.

Stephen Sondheim is known principally as a musical theatre composer, but his works are being performed more and more in the opera house. *Sweeney Todd* has wonderfully complex vocal lines with wide-ranging emotions, which benefit from performances by classically trained musicians.

Leonard Bernstein is revered as a major talent, but his 1971 *MASS* was quite controversial at its premiere. Now it only grows in stature. Its theatrical combination of sacred and profane is deeply moving and vividly entertaining.

Joe Newberry, songwriter/musician

This is just a small sample of the top of my head (and who knows, maybe one of my own songs will stand the test of time): "Blue Moon of Kentucky," Bill Monroe; "This Land is Your Land," Woody Guthrie (composed in 1940, but I mean, what is five years among friends); "Yesterday," Paul McCartney; "Imagine," John Lennon; "Orphan Girl," Gillian Welch; "Crazy,"

Willie Nelson; "Hot Buttered Rum," Tommy Thompson of the Red Clay Ramblers; "Rambling Boy," Tom Paxton; "The Times They Are a-Changing," Bob Dylan; "Fields of Gold," Sting; "Bridge Over Troubled Waters," Paul Simon; "Take Five," by the Dave Brubeck Quartet.

Tift Merritt, singer/songwriter

Bob Dylan: "Highway 61 Revisited," "Times They Are a-Changing," "Hard Rain's Gonna Fall."
Neil Young: "Ohio."

"We Shall Overcome," as adapted post-WWII during the Civil Rights movement.

Popular music is tied inextricably to the time and atmosphere in which it was created and is particularly powerful as protest and political commentary. My hope is that these songs will continue to survive and strengthen over time as a picture of history, and that their lessons will not need relearning.

Stephen Jaffe, composer

What we know is that music, one of life's great gifts, will be with us in one hundred years, and that it will continue to evolve. We don't know the form. If we're guided by the importance of music, and if we invest in its present, what we now value about musical expression will have a future. For it not to ossify, our musical culture requires musicians and audiences who advance music's substance and import, with a spirit of adventure and significance, in a word, with love. Said otherwise: you have to invent the future if you want it to be there. We're up to it.

It's our job as musicians – indeed it's the job of a great institution like the North Carolina Symphony – to make sure that the musical present includes the components of creativity (especially including the fostering of new composition), education (of players, and audiences, and patrons) and community, so that the next generation can shape future audiences through whatever technological and artistic tools they have at their disposal. Aspiring to make imaginative music – to make it interesting, special, attractive to

play and hear, alive for listeners – that’s a pretty big agenda for a composer or for a symphony orchestra. I’m betting my life on it.

Among my own works which best embody these qualities, and which I hope might survive, are Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (Bridge CD 9141), Homage to the Breath: Instrumental and Vocal Meditations for mezzo-soprano and ten players, with a text by Thich Nhat Hanh (Bridge CD 9255), and Offering, for flute, viola, and harp (recorded but not yet issued). But for a musician, uncertainty comes with the job description.

For every day in which I can live in the world of music, I’m grateful.

Not a genre or a work, but an artist: Frank Sinatra. Music is at its heart all about communication, and few artists, popular or otherwise, captured a mood or unspooled a narrative as well as the Chairman of the Board. And from a musical standpoint, he had an uncanny sense of “time” – how to turn a phrase, delay a cadence or insert a syncopating pause. That’s truly “timeless!”

**Jess Levin, violin,
North Carolina Symphony**

The first difficulty in predicting what musical works will still be heard a century in our future is that society and technology are changing so rapidly. I will guess that the

one will be played and enjoyed a century from now.” We’re too close. I’d love to think that some of my own compositions will outlive me, but who can say? Throughout history, some of the greatest artists have been confident of their worth, while others have spent their entire lives in self doubt. If they themselves didn’t know...

Phyllis Pancella, mezzo-soprano

I’ve plucked a few things from the seminal rock and pop closet to put forward, both great tunes/lyrics that will last through directness, simplicity and universality and more complex, groundbreaking stuff that will last because it will remain interesting

It’s amazing to me that even though those songs were written more than forty years ago, they still sound relevant & engaging.

John Lambert, music writer

Britten: *Peter Grimes* (1945); R. Strauss: *Metamorphosen* (1945-6); Copland: *Symphony No. 3* (1946); Messiaen: *Turangalila-Symphonie* (1946-8); Vaughan Williams: *Symphony No. 7* (1947-52); Prokofiev: *Sinfonia Concertante* (1952); Britten: *Canticle No. 2* (a chamber work for alto, tenor and piano, 1952); Bernstein: *Candide* (1956-89); Shostakovich: *Symphony No. 11* and *Piano Concerto No. 2* (both 1957); Poulenc: *Gloria* (1961); Bernstein: *Chichester Psalms* (1965); Glass: *ORION* (2004).

**Sarah Hicks, North Carolina Symphony
Associate Conductor**

West Side Story: Leonard Bernstein’s magnum opus and a true classic. The music is as fresh and alive today as it was in its 1957 Broadway premiere. It’s one for the ages.

Minimalism: One of the truly significant musical developments of the 20th century, minimalist techniques have crossed over from the classical medium to popular music, influencing everything from ’60s psychedelic rock and later prog rock to trance and ambient. The music of Terry Riley, Philip Glass and John Adams will continue to influence musical minds of all genres.

way people react to music will be colored by a tight integration of artificial intelligence into the human mind. The intellectually stimulating characteristics of music will be at least as intriguing to our followers as they are to us. By that I mean that the structure and playful development of materials that great composers of Western classical music (and certainly some of the best of the jazz and pop composers) have valued, alongside the directly emotionally appealing use of melody, harmony and timbre.

So, what post-WWII works might have a life in 2110 and beyond? My first emotional response is Prokofiev’s *Fifth Symphony*, which was completed right around the end of the war. I grew up loving that piece from about the age of seven and probably can’t judge it dispassionately. Still, to me it has all the characteristics that have enabled great works of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms to retain their audiences for centuries.

I’m sure that several of Shostakovich’s symphonic pieces will last another century, as will works by Benjamin Britten, Samuel Barber and Leonard Bernstein. There are bound to be works written much more recently that will also last, but I don’t feel that any of us can step back and say “that

and challenging. Important: I will be entirely skipping The Beatles and The Beach Boys. Too many to mention.

From the catchy category: “Stairway to Heaven,” “Time in a Bottle,” “Blowin’ in the Wind,” “You’ve Got a Friend,” “Respect,” “Walk on By,” “Mack the Knife,” “Girl from Ipanema,” “Dock of the Bay,” “Up On the Roof,” “Crying,” “Proud Mary,” “Bridge Over Troubled Water.”

The more complex stuff I’ll turn into a list of albums that have staying power: Pink Floyd, *Dark Side of the Moon* and *The Wall*; CSNY, *Deja Vu*; Joni Mitchell, *Court and Spark*; Queen, *A Night at the Opera*, Prince, *Purple Rain*; Fleetwood Mac, *Rumours*; Billy Joel, *The Stranger*; The Who, *Tommy*; Blondie, *Parallel Lines*; Simon & Garfunkel, *Bookends* and *Bridge Over Troubled Water*; Carole King, *Tapestry*; Talking Heads, *Stop Making Sense*; Peter Gabriel, *So*. 🎧

Interested in more opinions?

Please check our website at www.ncsymphony.org/stayingpower to see what more respondents had to say. We’d like to hear from you, too!



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