

Using video and interactive TV to reach and engage audiences

Rachel Coldicutt, Founder and Director, Caper; Tobias Möller, Head of Marketing and Communications, Berlin Philharmonic

Chaired by Tim Wood

Rachel Coldicutt is co-founder and director of innovation agency Caper. She is a strategist and creative producer who has been making interactive media since 1997, working across the arts and entertainment sectors for companies including Microsoft, BT, Encyclopaedia Britannica, the BBC, the V&A, UKTV and Endemol. She was until recently Head of Digital Media at the Royal Opera House, where she built and developed a range of award-winning digital content initiatives - including the Twitter Opera and an interactive on-demand version of *Don Giovanni*. Previously, she produced the UK's first museum podcast, and managed user-generated content at the V&A. She is also the founder of Culture Hack Day (www.culturehackday.org.uk), which brings cultural organisations together with technologists ([@rachelcoldicutt](https://twitter.com/rachelcoldicutt) / rachel@wearecaper.com).

Tobias Möller Tobias is Director of Marketing and Communications with Berlin Phil Media, a subsidiary of the Berliner Philharmoniker. In this position, he is responsible for marketing and public relations of the *Digital Concert Hall*, the Berliner Philharmoniker's virtual concert venue on the Web. Prior to this, Tobias Möller studied musicology in Hamburg and Vienna and worked in the recording industry for many years, most recently with the production company EuroArts.

In this seminar, provided thoughts on the opportunities created for the arts by connected / interactive TV looking at how we might best use this emerging technology to engage people with the arts from the comfort of their own homes. Tobias Möller from the Berlin Philharmonic looked at how they are enabling people to enjoy concerts on the internet anywhere in the world (www.digitalconcerthall.com/en).

Rachel Coldicutt: Video and Connected TV in the Cultural Sector

This will be an overview of what is happening more widely and the opportunities that are available. I've been making interactive content for tv since 1998 including the first broadband portal in the UK in 2000 and for Endemol, the BBC, the V&A and at the Royal Opera House.

We will look at

- What is connected TV?
- What does it mean for the arts?
- How to prepare

- Inspiration

There are two kinds of connected tv. The type that comes off a box like Virgin or Sky or alternatively there is the type that you watch in a browser. The type that comes out of the box is much harder to do because there are lots of hardware issues and standards to consider. Browser tv, which might come through your computer or on the mobile device, is easier but still has its complications.

In the second case we might not even be talking about a 'tv' at all as it could be carried around on a computer or a mobile device. 4OD has just launched on tablets for example.

To make it even more complicated it might not even be video – it could be games or internet related content.

There will be fewer moments when the family are all watching the tv together as a unit. Within a year or so, everyone here will have their own screen. The people in the room might be watching the same thing but they will be having their own experiences with their own screen.

TV channels and programming is also changing and becoming more fragmented. BBC 4 last week had a 4% share of the audience last week and Sky Arts 0.7%.

Television therefore isn't representing the same sort of marketing opportunity that people imagine.

For the arts, there are opportunities but it is difficult. No-one here I imagine works for a content management company or a broadcaster. It's difficult and even those who are doing this professionally struggle. The ITV player rarely works for example.

We also need to recognise how few people watch the arts on tv and that they watch the arts in different ways. There are very few people who like to sit down and watch four and a half hours of Wagner on television for example. On the other hand, as tv changes, broadening and fragmenting there is an opportunity at the margins for us.

There are 100 people working on the BBC iPlayer, not making content, or worrying about editorial they are just there ensuring that it works.

So the conclusion is – get someone else to take the technical strain because there are plenty of other things for us to do.

Strategy

This is about your audience and organisation, not trying to emulate others.

Something to think about now for the next few years is archive. It matters enormously so invest in it.

The skills you have in your organisation are also crucial. It's not just about handling a camera it's also about storytelling, commissioning, having an eye. Just because you've made a video of your holiday it doesn't mean you are going to win a Bafta. It is an art. If you forget this your content will get worse and worse.

Think like a commissioner, which might include saying 'no'. You need to be an editor not filming everything that happens because otherwise you will have lots of boring films. So be prepared to do unexpected things. For example, gaming is an area where the family unit is going.

And you have to think about who you are. Are you a media company or an artist? It isn't the same thing at all.

Opportunities

In the arts world we spend a lot of time at either end of these scales.

We make campaigns for hard to reach audiences on the one hand or aficionados on the other hand. On the aficionados side it usually involves middle aged men sitting in a room talking about something they haven't made. We're at the edges.

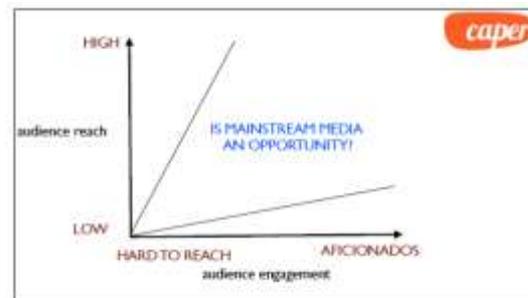
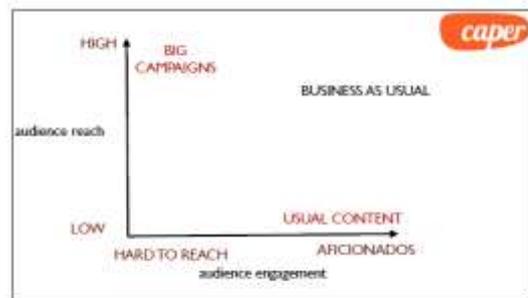
There's an opportunity in the middle. It's where most people are; for example, drama or factual entertainment for the sort of people who watch Antiques Roadshow, The Killing or The Wire.

We're just not offering it up in the right way.

Beginning the journey

At the Royal Opera House we have spent time trying to find ways of taking archives and making them interesting; it doesn't work just to take a clip. Even making a one and a half minute trailer for Romeo and Juliet at the O2 took us weeks. The trailer we made for Anna Nicole used original material, scripted, storyboarded, with our own props and actors. It nearly killed us but it was only two and a half minutes long. For 'A day in the life of a ballerina' we filmed a dancer for 16 hours which was reduced to 8 minutes [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rriyxZjqLtNs>]. It's had over 160,000 views on YouTube and we haven't really promoted it.

Looking forward I would love to see an arts documentary as good as 'Senna' which is all archive, no original filming and no talking heads.



The Arts Council film about Edward Burra made in the 1970s is half an hour long about a man and his art. Very simple- it doesn't have to be crazy stuff.

This is a game by Disney – not a video at all. It's a game and you can project a character on to your wall. It takes the gaming narrative to whole other level.

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Tobias Möller: new ways to present music on the internet

It would have been good to have listened to Rachel's presentation before we started this programme because we faced many of the questions that she spoke about, such as whether we are a media company or an arts organisation. We decided that we are still an arts organisation.

The digital concert hall is at the centre of the digital communication strategy of the Berliner Philharmoniker.

The digital concert hall is actually just a website where we transmit the orchestras live. We have installed 6 HD cameras in the Berlin Philharmonie which are remote controlled. With these we webcast almost every concert programme that the Berlin Philharmoniker gives in Berlin. Afterwards, these programmes are brought into the video archive where you can watch 128 concerts. There is a special section where you can watch videos, interviews, films about our education projects and so on.

[Tobias then showed a clip of a trailer for the concert hall]

Strategic importance

So why are we doing this?

Firstly, we wanted to intensify our contact with the international audience. The Berliner Philharmoniker has a strong worldwide following and gives about 40% of its concerts abroad. This is not enough to respond to the demand of world wide music lovers. It is therefore a chance for them to 'attend' the concerts.

It is also about developing new audiences. We try to attract people who might have a soft spot for classical music but haven't yet tried the concept of a classical concert.

In an age of increased competition for peoples' leisure time, the digital concert hall helps us to strengthen our brand. It helps us to improve our presence on the internet in general.

It's also about positioning the orchestra in the media world of tomorrow. The traditional music business cd sales and tv slots for classical music are declining. With this project, the orchestra has developed its own distribution channel which already contributes to the business of the orchestra and the importance will probably increase.

The business model

This is tricky. We are working within a very tight legal framework. Contractually, we are only allowed to use our concerts for internet transmission; no cds, dvds or tv transmissions. This means that we have to make our money through pay per view and ticket sales. Of course, it's still an unusual idea to pay for video on the internet, especially for classical music.

Therefore, the whole project would be unthinkable without the long term support of our sponsor, Deutsche Bank and the income from ticket sales.

Marketing and communications

Press coverage and pr is important. The digital concert hall is an interesting story to tell. No-one else of our type of artistic organisation has done this yet. So, we have a good presence in the media. Traditional mechanisms such as advertising have less importance, especially given that we are looking for an international audience.

It's much more successful to promote an online service online. The most important outlets are YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. The digital concert hall gives us the chance to use excerpts on our YouTube channel (which we established in 2009); three minutes of the 'nicest part of Beethoven's Eighth Symphony' for example. Even if you don't go on to register for the digital concert hall it gives people an experience of the orchestra. These videos have been watched over 8 million times and we also embed them on our Facebook channel. It's also a useful way of helping us to sell tickets. People using Facebook seem to enjoy watching the videos and we have over 250,000 friends. Twitter is less important, but we have 20,000 followers.

Results

Since the concert hall opened we have sold 40,000 tickets. There are three different types of ticket: 48 hours, 30 day and a premium one for a year which is €149. This is relatively expensive but you get a lot for it. We currently have 6000 people who use the premium ticket.

It's not just about selling tickets. One of the most interesting results is that we have been able to know our audience much better through countless comments we receive on Facebook and YouTube.

All of these activities have also increased our presence on the internet.

Future developments

We always have to make sure that we keep the technology updated; making sure it is state of the art technology.

Interesting for us is the merging of tv and the internet. It's much more interesting for many people to watch a concert in the comfort of a tv in their living room rather than on the computer. We are in contact with Sony and Samsung and if you buy a tv with an internet connection from these suppliers there is a pre-installed app for the digital concert hall which is really exciting.

At the same time, we are looking for new channels where we can place our content. There are some restrictions contractually but we are currently looking at live cinema transmissions.

We also want to extend our editorial content, with more 'behind the scenes' coverage, documentaries, clips and interviews; everything which gives the audience a feeling that they are close to the Philharmonie and the musicians. It's difficult to achieve. Our current content is not sufficient for this and it's something we are working on to intensify the Berliner Philharmoniker experience.

Questions and discussion

Tim Wood (chair) (TW): A question for both of you. I think I heard from both of you that we should pretty much put aside the idea that it will make us money for now. There might be all sorts of other benefits and we might not be in the business of making money anyway but is that true – should we forget about the idea of making money by putting things online.

Rachel Coldicutt (RC): You can drive income under certain circumstances. A gentle plug for something that went live today might give an example. The last thing I developed at ROH [before becoming freelance] was a game called 'The show must go on' which you pay 69p for. Because the tablets have come into being in a different way people are happier to pay for a tablet experience and owning an app. whereas the way that YouTube and iPlayer developed means that people expect those sorts of things for free. There probably is a model around premium downloads but whether this audience is large enough to make a margin on it is doubtful I suppose.

TW: The Berlin Philharmoniker has quite large audiences for an orchestra perhaps ...

Tobias Möller (TM): Yes, but we still have to face the same sort of challenges. One of the good things about being an arts organisation is that when you create your own content, it is exclusive content. People understand that this is produced exclusively for them and the internet. It has not gone through all the distribution channels for cd, dvd and tv. This is appreciated, that it is created by people who get the salaries. It is a chance for any arts organisation creating content. On the other hand it's costly to produce and no-one is getting rich through the concert hall. The delightful thing is that when we have guest artists (who only get a symbolic fee) and we have to have their permission they are almost always supportive of the idea. They understand that it is also partly for them as artists – it is supporting their own future.

Tom Hunter (LondonCalling.com): I was fascinated by the graph Rachel which showed the different types of production that people were doing; at one end trailers and at the other talking heads, in the middle lots of Mad Men. Is this true across different platforms – tablets, phone? Is the trailer better produced for the mobile audience?

RC: No not at all. What I'm saying is that a 130 second trailer is a very short amount of time – it's not a channel. If what you are doing is not making marketing content then the content is the crucial thing. People will not just come and watch trailers. Loads of arts organisations make really awful films which are not helping anyone. If you are serious about moving into this space it's about programmes not trailers.

Elizabeth White, South Bank Centre: Have you [TM] found that the digital concert hall has cannibalised the concert sales in the hall?

TM: Not at all and otherwise we wouldn't do it. We have no interest in persuading people that they shouldn't go into a concert. We think it works the other way round. People get used to the idea of a classical music concert. Even if they don't come to us hopefully new audiences might be persuaded to drop into their local orchestra.

EW: How did you decide on the ticket prices?

TM: We just invented them! There was not really anything to compare them with. The year ticket was something we developed later on. Originally we had a season pass which didn't work so well, starting in August and ending in July and costing the same price no matter when you bought it, which is ridiculous. Sometimes we've tried various sales promotions but people didn't seem to be very price sensitive. Anyone who wanted to buy a ticket at all seemed to be happy to pay this high price.

RC: Can I add something about the ROH and the issue of the cannibalisation of the audience? It's quite complicated because the price point comes in. For something that might cost £80 to go to which you've seen several times you may be more likely to go to the cinema [to see a streamed opera] than the ROH. So these sorts of concerts/operas might not have full auditoriums be but the cinemas are full. So it depends on what you are aiming for overall.

Jen Davies, Park Circus Films: How by creating and disseminating the content online have your audience profiles changed, if at all? Is it bringing new people into the physical spaces and how is this changing the shape of it?

RC: The thing about the ROH is that it is normally sold out. The nightly capacity of the auditorium is about 1000 whereas there have been 6 million views of the videos in the last year. So actually there wouldn't be room for everyone who wanted to come after seeing the videos. There have been interesting international audience shifts like large audiences [for the videos] in Russia, Mexico and South East Asia whereas Europe was much less active for us. I would never look at the content strategy as a

homogenous thing because you make different things for different audience groups. If you make a film for friends, you might not have many different viewers but they could look at it hundreds of times. On the other hand, Anna Nicole or Alice in Wonderland were syndicated on lots of sites in America. The people who look at these might not even be thinking of them as operas or ballets.

TM: For us, there has been no effect on the audience of the actual hall so far as the huge majority of the people who watch the digital concert hall are international and don't have the chance to go to the concert hall in Berlin.

Jo Johnson, London Symphony Orchestra: I'm interested in what you [TM] said about your legal framework, that you were only allowed to broadcast on the internet and not able to use the content elsewhere? Why is that?

TM: When we started, we thought really big and had this idea of exploiting the content through any channel, be it cd, dvd or tv. However, when you are working with the big names in the music business, many of them have exclusive record contracts including our own conductor. So, we need to get all the artists released from their contracts and it was hard enough in itself just to get them released for the internet. It depended, with the record companies, whether they thought of it as a concert hall or as a dvd on the internet. Actually, we were able to persuade them that the digital concerts could help them to sell the cds, because it aroused interest.

Nicola Christie, Random Dance: you [TM] talked a little bit about your audiences but do you have more information about them like their ages, types etc?

TM: Less than we would like to have. When you have a registration process, of course your first thought is to ask them all the sorts of questions you'd like to know like how old are they, what work do they do etc. but, because we just starting we were wary of putting obstacles in their way. So we decided to keep it as lean as possible. We just ask them where they came from and that is 20% from Germany, 20% from Japan, 18% from USA and the rest from other countries in Europe and South Asia.

NC: Do you have any sense through your conversations how old they are?

TM: They are younger than the usual concert audience and older than the average internet user

RC: If you are syndicating a video through Facebook or YouTube there are loads of stats. We found through YouTube that the average viewer (for ROH videos) was around 54 and male. Facebook was skewed to a much younger audience but still male.

NC: Were you [RC] able at the ROH to measure the amount of click throughs from the trailers to ticket sales?

RC: Yes, we did loads of work on that. What we found was that people didn't make impulse buys; they wanted to share the video, discuss it, and watch it again etc, before making a purchase so this skewed the metrics slightly. However, we found that with a good trailer we had a click through rate of around 15% from the videos through to the website. And actually you still have to sell the trailer. I genuinely don't think they sell the concerts directly in that sense unless it is going via another advertising channel.

Marliese Andexer, Impact: As most arts organisations do not have budgets as big as yours how would you recommend that a small organisation goes about this? How can they leverage this doing some trailers, vox pops etc?

TM: I cannot quite answer this question because I'm not a producer but the equipment gets cheaper everyday and when we started this project it was a higher investment than it would be today. With a small team it should be possible to produce small trailers. We have a famous example in Germany called Duisburg Philharmoniker which is a small orchestra but have become well known through their active social media with just a little bit, not much video content, but they take it seriously when they do it.

RC: In a way, turning on a camera is the last thing you should do. Spend time thinking about it, have a strategy. It's the things that you don't film which are important – making interesting things and being careful about what you are doing. Your audience will appreciate it much more if you produce two great things a year. Equally, it's not just about making it but also about distributing it. Always make it for an audience, not the artistic director.

We tried this ...

Jen Davies, Head of Communications and Marketing, Park Circus Films; Thomas Wickell, Marketing Director, Malmo Opera, Sweden; Jon Alexander, Project Manager, National Trust's MyFarm

Chaired by Roger Tomlinson

Jen Davies works part time at Park Circus Films, an international distribution company with a focus on putting classic films on the big screen. She is responsible for design, the look of each theatrical release and for the company's online development and use of the internet. She also works on freelance marketing, consultancy and design work and is currently working with a mobile developer on a digital treasure hunt iPhone game for the National Museums of Scotland and in the process of finishing a short film about hot air ballooning. She was previously Head of Communications and Marketing for Glasgow Film where she saw a 53% increase in annual cinema admissions and 127% in festival attenders over four years winning awards along the way for audience development and use of digital technologies. An occasional photographer, she has had photographs published in publications such as Grazia and The Guardian. Jen loves adventures, wandering around the city and making things happen (www.jendavies.co.uk @jendavies).

Thomas Wickell is Marketing Director of Malmö Opera where his mission is to manage and develop the audience that the opera attracts as well as seeking new ways to achieve a growth in audience for musical theatre, primarily in southern Sweden and Denmark. His interest in creating new and interesting ways to talk to the audience, has driven a number of projects that have received attention and created interest in opera and musical theatre. Thomas has previously worked with major public events in sports, music and exhibitions recently as CEO of a concert hall in eastern Sweden.

Jon Alexander is the project manager for the National Trust's MyFarm project, seeking to recruit 10,000 'farmers' (no experience necessary) to help run the Wimpole Farm in Cambridgeshire. Jon's background is in advertising and brand innovation, but he abandoned this in 2010 to pursue the MyFarm concept, excited by the opportunity to use digital media to facilitate a connection with real, big issues while still having some fun. He won the inaugural Ashridge Sustainable Innovation Award in 2009 for his work on the new meaning of value, is part of a blog community on the future of the creative industries at www.conservation-economy.org and tweets at @jonjalex

This session provided three case studies from organisations tapping into the social, networked world of digital media to engage new audiences, providing practical examples of the way this works in practice.