

## Panel II: The Aesthetic Education of Man for the Beauty of the Mind and the Soul

# From the Question & Answer Session

*Panel II of the Feb. 16, 2019 Schiller Institute conference, in Morristown, N.J., concluded with a question and answer session moderated by Dennis Speed. An edited transcript of selections from the question and answer session follows.*

**Question:** My name is Lynn Yen. I'm part of the Foundation for the Revival of Classical Culture, and we advocate the use of proper tuning, the tuning at which music should be performed, and the relationship of that to science. That practice came about after our second Carnegie Hall concert back in 2013 with the concert pianist Tian Jiang. We had a conversation with Lyndon LaRouche about that performance, and issues relating to tuning.

I would like to actually direct the question to the panel with regards to the issues and the importance around this idea of proper tuning, which is tuning at C-256, and why it's important. If the panelists can discuss its importance in relation to both musical performance as well as to science, that would be really great, because it's an idea that needs to be explored more fully. Certainly, in the past, when I went to China, and discussed the question of proper tuning and musical performance, it's not an idea that they knew anything about.

**John Sigerson:** For those of you who didn't notice, we did perform all of the pieces today at the scientific tuning of C at about 256, or as it's better known, the "Verdi tuning," the tuning that was demanded by Verdi, but was actually used by all the great Classical composers—Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Schubert, which is about A-432.

Nowadays, people tune their instruments usually to a higher tuning of around A-440, but actually, in Europe, it's gone way up to even A-450 or A-452,

which really means that in one part of the world, you may be playing what you think is an A, but it's actually an A-sharp.

This creates havoc in the world, but it's not just a question of organization. The reason why we started our campaign to return to this tuning that was demanded by the great Classical composers, is that nothing in music should be arbitrary. If you ask somebody why they tune their instrument to A-440, the only



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

answer they can give is, "Well, that's the way we've always done it"—which is actually not even true. It was actually raised over the course of the 19th century, as a result of the Romantic movement, the movement that said you can set anything arbitrary, as long as it sounds more exciting. And so they started raising the pitch.

When Lyndon LaRouche started discussing this question of the lower tuning, for musicians who had grown up in that environment of saying "well, this is the way we've always done it," it was quite shocking. Because he was asserting something which was *way* beyond just a musical question. It's a question of art in general: That is, when you're doing art, *nothing is arbitrary. Everything* should be subject to rational thought—

that does not mean logical thought, but it means rational deliberation. And indeed, if you look at all sorts of processes in the universe, including the organization of the Solar system, including the organization of subatomic processes, you will find that there's an ordering principle, which it is incumbent upon man to know and to use.

One of the crucial proofs that LaRouche asserted, which, again, some people really didn't believe that it was a proof, was that the human voice is tuned to that particular tuning. Most specifically, human voices have registers, they have a chest register, they have a middle register, and they have a high register, and there are transitions between these registers. And especially if you're training your voice to do very difficult, very challenging pieces such as the arias by Giuseppe Verdi, singers have found that if they use the higher tuning to do the transitions, their voices suffer, gravely.

As a matter of fact, one of our close collaborators, Carlo Bergonzi, the great, late tenor, one of the greatest tenors of the 20th century, he held seminars with us, saying specifically that if we do not return to this—you can call it the scientific or the natural tuning—we will never have great Verdi voices again. And he was correct in that.

Again, it's mostly a question of not doing anything that's arbitrary, because in art today, if you ask somebody why they're doing something, the response will be, "Well, it's because I feel like it," or "because that's the way it's always done," or something like that. That's not enough. Unless you know why you're doing something, or else, unless you're asking yourself the question, why am I doing what I am doing—you're really not acting like a human being, you're acting like an animal which is just being trained to do something.

### **They Call This Higher Power 'God'**

**Bruce Director:** I want to add to that. There's a scientific principle involved in this. In the latest *EIR*, there's a series of three articles by Lyndon LaRouche from 1986, reprinted in the last three issues of *EIR*, in which he talks about this.

Scientists really have to understand how the physical and biological domains of the universe are actually susceptible and organized by the human mind. What you just experienced really illustrates that, in

my view. Because it's the organization of the composition, the creative idea of Beethoven to compose this great piece of music, which requires the use of biological and physical processes, and they're all different—you see the piano has its capabilities, the winds, the horns.

LaRouche often spoke about how you cannot determine the pitches that are being used by any mathematical function. Yes, you can write a mathematical function with a spiral and divide it equally into 12 parts and you'll get mathematical values for the tones, but if these musicians had performed this piece using those values, you would have got up and walked out! It would have sounded terrible. It wouldn't have had any impact emotionally on you at all!

The scientists have to understand that this is really how to start thinking about the physical universe itself, what they're investigating. In the speech that Max Planck gave, from which I quoted earlier, he talks about how there is no matter. It only exists as vibrations that hold structure together, which are determined by a higher power. He calls the power, "God." As he said: Every civilized person has for the last several millennia—they call this higher power, "God."

This is something that science has to absorb now, and we have to get back to this approach, because all the problems in modern science that people throw around—quantum physics and dark matter, and dark energy, and everything else—you'll never get to it, if you can't understand why LaRouche said we have to sing at C-256. [laughter]

### **King and Queen of All Instruments**

**Question:** My name is Don Sellers. My question is more on the construction of musical instruments and whether or not they were made differently during the Classical period. Specifically, as an instrument-maker, if you had in mind, making an instrument tuned to C-256, do you make it differently from one that would be tuned to A-440 or A-452?

**Sigerson:** Most instruments, except the brass instruments, are made of things that were formerly living, and especially in the development of violins, there was tremendous development in Italy during the 17th century, to figure this out. Also, there were kinds of living designs of especially stringed instruments, developed by Leonardo da Vinci and others, espe-

cially modeling the human head, (and also the heads of animals), using those as models for the way that the vibrations of the human head can be replicated in the instruments.

I would also point out that there's been a lot of research on older instruments. Some has had useful results, some has not.

But we need to be thinking about the future! We need to develop new instruments, even more beautiful instruments that have not been thought of before, instruments that can even be closer to the human voice, because the human voice, really, is the king and the queen of all instruments. That's why singing in cho-

One example of this is the cymbal. If you hold a cymbal and someone takes a mallet and just whacks on the cymbal—*donk!* But if you want the cymbal to resonate, you touch it, you get a vibration going already, and then, when you strike the cymbal, there's a sound which carries.

So, I think this is a very important question in terms of tuning—this quality of resonance. You use that term, also, in language, in poetry, and in a political moment, where at one particular time you express an idea and,— *donk!*—doesn't move. But in another moment, you express that idea and it carries. [applause]



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

ruses is so important for everyone, because all of the other physical instruments are simply ways of getting at exactly the same kinds of beauty that the human voice is capable of.

**Diane Sare:** There is also a principle of resonance which I think is related to a principle of a mass strike. If you try to make an instrument—I'll take the case of brass, and it's true with the winds as well—you can play a note through a certain length of tubing and force the note up or down by changing the vibration, but the sound becomes more ugly, unless the production of the sound actually is coherent with the length of the tubing, to put it crudely. So that there are ways of forcing a sound, which are unnatural, and ways of producing a sound, which will resonate precisely with the construction of the instrument.

### 'Placing a Note'

**Question:** Good afternoon, my name is Robert Branca. I'm from Boston, Massachusetts. For John, the director of the chorus group, would you elaborate, or maybe give an example of, what you meant when you used the term "placing a note," versus simply singing or projecting it?

**Sigerson:** It's a spiritual question.

**Follow-Up:** Does the note come out the same?

**Sigerson:** It's a spiritual question in terms of the placement. That is, the mind needs to *imagine* the effect that you're going to have on the audience. La-Rouche never used "placement" in a merely technical sense that maybe a lot of singing teachers use,

although there's aspects of it which ring true.

The question is, how can you create an effect which has a kind of least-action principle in terms of its ability to communicate the idea that you want to get across to the audience. Lyndon LaRouche, as you saw from some of the videos here, was a master at that kind of placement.

I could talk about specifics in terms of voice placement, but in voice placement it's very straightforward this way—if you hear a student sing who hasn't figured things out, they will try to make sounds, and they'll try to emit sounds. A real poet who is a singer does not emit sounds. They place the poetry in their mind, in the idea, and the singing of it flows from that. Of course, that requires a lot of work to make your instrument be able to do that, but it's the intention to do that, which is really the kernel of placement.

We can refer you to some wonderful discussions that LaRouche has had on placement. I just don't want to reduce it into something less than it really is. It's a question of exactly what Diane was talking about: How do you create the kind of resonance in another person? If you're always talking in a monotone, you're not going to be able to get very much done, because everyone will be completely bored.

So, you have to place your voice. How do you modulate your voice, in order to be able to get that? But again, those are just technical things. The main thing is using your mind—controlling the image that you want to get across to the audience. Can you do that, and get it shaped in just that way?

I had experiences working with LaRouche, where someone was singing perfectly well—acceptably, by professional standards—and LaRouche would blow up. He would walk out of the room, because he didn't hear that kind of placement in the person. He just heard notes, he just heard people punching out notes. He was completely bored by those kinds of displays.

That's what we try to do in the singing, but also in our organizing: That is, we want to spark the creativity that is in every single person we meet. *Every single person*. [applause]

### What If They Don't Want To Listen?

**Question:** José, from the Bronx. Megan, I really liked how you opened with the idea of culture, and how you think we should believe that our opponents can be

better, and that's how we win the fight. That's a strange statement to make, but I know it to be true, because Martin Luther King once fought for nonviolent principles: How do you look at somebody opposite from you, who's spitting in your face and calling you racial slurs, and say, "I love you, because you're made in the image of God, and I believe you can be better." Is that how you win a fight? I like to think it's true.

So now you have a culture in which people want to die! People want to kill themselves, they want to overdose, they want to indulge in this terrible music and culture. I personally think it's because they don't think they can be better, because they've lost the meaning of what it means to be human. And so, is it simply just showing them something as beautiful as Beethoven, as what we just heard with the *Choral Fantasy*, conducted by John Sigerson, that can pull them out of that state, where they believe they are not worthy of being human? Or is there something more that needs to be done? What if they don't want to listen? How do you make them listen? What do you do?

**Megan Beets:** Helga has said many times, that Schiller, of all people, had the most optimistic conception of mankind, of true human nature, and I've found that to be absolutely true, as well. Schiller had complete confidence in the beauty of the human soul.

Yes, in society, you may have demented people here and there, who have serious problems, but the majority of humanity is able to respond to the truthfulness of a beautiful idea, whether they planned to, or not. I think that's the key—that there is a principle of the human soul which is related to everything we've been talking about in the morning panel, and in this afternoon panel: The emotional passion of discovery! That's what happens in Classical music, in the performance and in the participating as an audience member of a well-performed piece of Classical music. The same process unfolds in the mind, as unfolds in the process of making a scientific breakthrough of a new principle. The human being is built such that the natural response to that is love.

People are changed by that! You don't walk away the same person. Take a person who's very degenerated—some from terrible circumstances or surrounded by drugs and ugliness. You take them to a Beethoven concert. Maybe they don't walk away and suddenly they're a genius. *But!* They're changed. They're af-

fect. There's a little crack. And I firmly believe that we *can* transform all of society in this way.

We have to fight to surround our fellow citizens with beauty, with a firm conviction that they will rise to the occasion. I think this is especially important with young people. I think most young people now are actually fed up with the banality of the culture! I think for the most part, young people are *looking*, are hungry for something better. It's clearly not provided in current culture, but the potential is there. The more that we can organize and do outreach, such as pulling in as many musicians as possible into what we're doing, into presenting these kinds of beautiful ideas to the population, I think we really can spark the kind of res-

even to Alpha Centauri and beyond. What is the connection, or the meaning of this cultural transformation, as we look into that future?

**Beets:** It's funny, as you were speaking, just before you got to the idea of a galactic perspective, I was thinking of this. Because revolutions and upshifts in the power and the meaning of the human species don't come about through some kind of logical elaboration or some continuation of the current organization of society. You need a leap. A leap similar to a leap of discovery, to a completely new system which bears no resemblance, for the most part, to the old system. And I think what you bring up, about giving humanity a



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

onance process that Diane was describing.

### A Galactic Identity

**Question:** Hi, I'm Daniel Burke. I also want to speak to Megan's presentation, and particularly her appeal at the end, that people take this into themselves as a mission. I've been working to reach others with the message, with the principles that we're discussing today. I have found that the phenomenon of a mass strike is very real.

I want to ask a question that looks beyond, because in order to have this transformation of culture that you're calling for, we will need a galactic vision. There is a fight now for exactly what Mr. LaRouche was speaking about in the clip this morning, of a fusion propulsion system for reaching into the Solar system, and

galactic identity, is crucial.

The next phase of the human species is to leave the Earth and assume our proper place as an extraterrestrial species, one that may have originated *on* planet Earth, but is not a species *of* planet Earth.

In doing this, we create the opportunity for a certain reconceptualization of the principles that govern our Solar system, the principles that govern our galaxy, the principles of life—the role of human creativity and human cognition in and over all of this. I think the new levels of understanding of what a human being *is*, what the process of creativity *is* per se, what powers we have to wield over the physical universe—I think this drives forward and necessitates the development of a new culture, new ideas which we've never conceived of before. As John called for, new instruments, higher, more de-

veloped forms of poetry and musical composition which match that level of elevation of the human mind.

### Creativity or Death

**Director:** There's also a very important political significance of this issue you raised. Throughout human history, there's been a complete coherence between the way people think the universe works, the way they think they should behave, and the way they think society works. The entire period from the death of Archimedes until the Renaissance, was dominated by the Ptolemaic idea, that the Earth was at the center, unmoved, and that the farther out you got from the Earth, it changes less and less until you get as far as you possibly can from the center of this big sphere, and that's where

versal law. They can't do it! It doesn't exist, because it's not true.

The universe is creative and is governed by this principle of creativity.

If you have a society that is organized around the idea that man is extending his creative power in and over the universe, into the galaxies, that creates a whole different concept of what your society should be organized around. Not around conforming to computer algorithms or computing machines, but around the idea that we are gaining greater and greater control over the universe. Lyndon LaRouche said that, over, and over, and over again.

So this is not just a philosophical question, or one to be discussed in some abstract moralistic way, but it is the political issue of our day! Are we going to organize our society according to these principles? Or, are we going to fall back into the Dark Age that befell mankind for 1,500 years, from the death of Archimedes to the Renaissance?

### How Music Touches the Soul

**Question:** Hi, this is Alvin. In this past week, and particularly this morning, in listening to Lyn, I'm reminded, as I'm sure many people are, of many things.

And one of the things I was thinking about was how another organizer, who is no longer with us, was key in actually recruiting me, because while it was based on Lyn's presence as a force and as a person, it was Jerry Pyenson who stuck with me, and stayed after me. And when Megan talks about making a crack, that's important.

And then, today, I made another step forward, but it started with a crack, 20 years ago. So, I, too, thank Lyn and everyone for sticking with me, and I need to do the same for all others around me. I lack patience and understanding, and that's not what Lyn was talking about. I wanted to share that. And thank you, all.

**Question:** My name is Safida. I'm a New Yorker, originally from the northern part of Pakistan. Thank



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

everything is perfect, because it stops changing. That was society; that was the Roman Empire. That was the concept: don't change anything. Everybody has their place.

Well, of course, that's inhuman. You can't maintain a society in a steady state, because the universe is not organized that way. Cusa broke that with his idea that in God, the center and the circumference are one. These are not distant things. There's one universe, and it is inherently creative. In the last 200 years or so, we've seen the promotion of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which is just a complete fraud!—to say that the principles that govern a closed heat-engine are the principles of the universe as a whole! If you want to see an emotional reaction, tell somebody to prove to you that the Second Law of Thermodynamics is a uni-

you for your impressive performances.

I just came to the line to make a comment. Somebody asked a question, should we teach music? My answer is, “Yes!”

From my childhood, I used to sing the religious songs, and then gradually I started singing. When I worked in Afghanistan, in the very remote areas of Afghanistan, Badakhshan, there was no light and there were bumpy roads. I was based there for a year. Music was the only thing that enabled me to survive in that culture, in that environment. Because music touches your soul, and then it touches your spirit, and that has a connection with your brain, with your heart—that gives you much vision.

When you are depressed, music is the source that calms you. So that means music is something that gives you peace. We talk about peace and we talk about humanity, so that means music is important for everyone, every child.

So parents and teachers, they have to teach music. Thank you.

**Sigerson:** The peace comes from problem-solving. It’s not just an effect, sort of a “Mozart effect,” and so forth, that people talk about, when you play Mozart to the cows and the plants. [laughter] Human beings are not cows, and human beings are not plants.

The great composers present *paradoxes* in their music. It’s a problem that needs to be solved, and they’re allowing *you* to participate in the solution to that problem. *That* is peace, because that is pleasure. That is true, intellectual pleasure, to be able to participate in that kind of creative problem-solving. That is what brings peace to children and to all of us.

### **Through Beauty, Proceed To Freedom**

**Speed:** I want to say something in response to the last comment as well.

The Manhattan chorus was founded in November-December of 2014, as a response to the death, by choking, of Eric Garner. Eric Garner was an African American who was selling cigarettes on the street and had been doing it repeatedly. He had been warned seven times, and had continued to do it, and was killed by a police officer, in the course of his apprehension. A video of his arrest went all over.

Many strong emotions were elicited from many dif-

ferent people about that, who then talked about it as a case of racism and talked about it in many different ways.

In looking at the chaos that was beginning to erupt in New York City, involving a 50,000-person demonstration, for example, across the Brooklyn Bridge that almost ended up in a massive fight between the police and the people who were protesting, we decided that we needed to do something. The night that we began the process, two policemen were killed—shot in the back of the head, in Brooklyn—as our performance began. This caused our performers to have a discussion, some of them, afterward.

Just now, we talked about solving problems. John told you that great composers are always thinking of how they solve problems. How do you solve *that* problem, in the United States, today? And I don’t mean racism. I mean the problem of a New Dark Age.

Well, you heard us, earlier this morning, play you something from Lyndon LaRouche—who said, we’re not going to export “things,” we’re going to export cities.

You have to propose an alternative, which is both meaningful, and has pungency and force, and above all, beauty.

I remember LaRouche, when I first met him, with his horn-rimmed glasses, and bow tie. He had, perhaps, three shirts—one of the shirts had an iron stain in the back. We were pretty young, we were Black nationalists and other sorts of radicals. We saw him coming, and I said, “What is this?” He would then begin just asking very embarrassing questions, like, “You guys think you’re tough, right? Do you know how to run a government? Suppose you had power: You say you’re for Black Power, right? But what do you know about power?”

And that was beautiful. [applause]

I hope people have gotten the idea, particularly in this panel, about a principle that Helga, more than anybody else, brought to this association—the idea of the *beautiful soul*. That’s an idea that is in everyone. And whether we’re talking about somebody who tragically dies, like an Eric Garner, or the policemen who tragically died, shot in the back of the head by somebody else who thinks they’re avenging Eric Garner, we believe that it is through beauty that people proceed to freedom. And that’s what the Schiller Institute is all about.