

strate how even, especially from a music community point of view, program is everywhere.

Anthony Newcomb (1984) points out how even nonprogrammatic orchestral music from the nineteenth century would quite frequently, and quite casually, be written and heard as connected to and as expressions of larger literary forms, or of prevailing ideas and themes beyond specific literary works. To understand these works, Newcomb says, we must look beyond formal properties and musical architecture. Other questions pertain. What were people thinking and feeling as they wrote, and received, music? How did words process and transform the pure musical experience?

Through the period we find that even notions of musical absolutes depend more on language, on externals than it may have seemed. E. T. A. Hoffman holds forth on the notion of how Beethoven's *absolute* music brings us to "the spirit realm," to the place of highest human expression and meaning, though what that meaning might be remains unarticulated.⁵⁰ Similarly Philip Goepf makes a point of rejecting the musical crutches of liturgical or literary texts as he privileges pure music.⁵¹ Then, paradoxically, in that pure, unprogrammatically place he finds musical meaning all over.

The first melody for instrument alone had to atone for the new lack of words, avoid the danger of "mere vacant beauty." Here begins the stir for a definite language of pure tones. And this is significant, too: none of the older forms were the achievement of music itself, its self-found utterance. They are foreign; they belonged to poetry, like the song, or to the dance, like the minuet. See, therefore, how this new sonata form is actually the first proper mode of expression of the pure art of music. *It says something in mere tones.*⁵²

And what does music say? Harmony, orchestration, all further musical development was a symptom of a need to talk about the tune, in which musical talk would reside meaning. Ultimately, all musical means would combine to express "one homogeneous expression of a great emotional idea."⁵³

Goepf's expression is potentially opaque, the idea potentially vague. How can we understand what music is saying to us?