

program, can be seen as an attempt to return text for and from the people to the art music that had, in being sundered from folk traditions, been taken away from them. Instead of refined aristocratic strains or heroic individualism, both of which were beyond common reach and outside of common experience, program was at least partly designed as something unspecialized, unprivileged, and accessible.⁷³

It was one of the sentiments of the age that art, and in the present instance music, was for healing and education, truth and beauty.⁷⁴ But these were not to be vaguely edifying abstractions; what was required was that truth and beauty bear fruit in action or improvement. Why was the program important? Why does it remain so?

Hegel, in his *Aesthetics*, makes an essential point. The *connoisseur* is able to comprehend and appreciate music in a sophisticated and rarefied way. This kind of enjoyment is not available to the layman, but this does not mean that the layman should be left to and derided for his own musical devices. The laity has the right to its own enjoyment.

So complete an absorption is seldom the privilege of the amateur, to whom there comes at once a desire to fill out this apparently meaningless outpour of sound and to find intellectual footholds for its progress and, in general, more definite ideas and a more precise content for that which penetrates into his soul. In this respect, music becomes symbolic for him, yet, in his attempts to overtake its meaning, he is confronted by abstruse problems, rapidly rushing by, which do not always lend themselves to solution and which are altogether capable of the most varied interpretations.⁷⁵

The layman's solution? Program. Liszt affirms that communication is the job of art, which means that the assistance rendered by programmatic forms does not diminish artistry—it makes artistry possible. "A work which offers only clever manipulation of its materials will always lay claim to the interest of the immediately concerned—of the artist, student, *connoisseur*—but, despite this, it will be unable to cross the threshold of the artistic kingdom."⁷⁶ So Liszt, only partly rationalizing his chosen approach, derides musical professionals as cold formalists whose work is inaccessible to noninitiates, and lifeless to all.⁷⁷