

Country,” “March to the Scaffold,” and “Dream of a Witches’ Sabbath” all signal an important change: a story is as important as the music being used to support it. Berlioz made this reversal explicit by publishing a program with his symphony, to be read before listening, in which the events of his musical narrative were made very explicit.

These compositions were original, as were the narratives attached to them. Another kind of programmatic musical narrative would adapt preexisting texts (play, poem, legend, even landscape) to new musical settings.<sup>9</sup> In this regard symphonic overtures, particularly some by Beethoven, are directly antecedent to later programmatic forms. It is important to remember in the context of this study that this music’s expressivity was directly related to the theatrical works (Goethe’s *Egmont*, Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus*) which it supported.

This interdependence is not without precedent, and I will presently demonstrate the pattern’s recurrence in film culture.<sup>10</sup> As for program music itself, the dictionary account by Roger Scruton is that it evoked dramatic events while maintaining musical self-sufficiency.<sup>11</sup> Beethoven and Berlioz both composed overtures that were related to literary sources (Scott’s *Waverly*, and *Rob Roy*), but which were performed separate from any other kind of literary or theatrical setting. But I wish to emphasize that although the degree of literary preeminence varied, in much serious music the communication of musical meanings was at first anchored to and made possible by narrative and literary forms, by text.

Franz Liszt is the central figure in the development and codification of the symphonic poem and of program music, both of which terms he coined. Liszt’s early piano pieces from the 1830s contain descriptive passages, and though he largely avoided a too literal rendering of the motivating literary or historical sources, through imitation and word painting, he nevertheless sought to evoke the external by musical means. Later he composed a series of twelve symphonic poems (1848–58) that elaborated this external strategy. Examples of the kind of subjects that interested Liszt include a rendering of nature’s immensity (*Ce pu’on entend sur la montagne*, 1848–49, after Hugo), a description of a fifth-century battle (*Hunnenschlacht*, 1857, inspired by a painting), a