

in the stalls there were many who were able to read against the intended industrial grain. At the core of the contrary reading was the idea that commercial, conventional film's parallel processes and straightforward representations may have been simple and comprehensible, but they were not adequate to the complexity, richness, or direness of art and experience.

So it was that the musical community, when it condescended to take notice of film music, consistently decried its subservient state. Musicians and musical scholars believed and had a stake in the independence and integrity of music, but they felt that these things were, and were likely to remain, nonexistent within the confines of the film industry. Other voices, more sympathetic to cinematic projects, nevertheless sided with the musicians in their perpendicular relation to and their general rejection of film musical parallelism. For film modernists of formalist persuasion the effects of conventional film music were aesthetically impoverished. For the ideologically and politically minded, these effects were even more serious: the conventional devices of film music, and of commercial film generally, had a dangerous influence on both spectators and citizens. These films left audiences domesticated and enervated, with the result that audience members were circumscribed in the expression, apprehension, and exercise of freedom, and of freedom's responsibilities.

A good deal of time has passed since these first formulations were made, and a good deal of more measured theoretical and practical activity has taken place. The need for this more reasonable discussion has at least something to do with the totalizing tendencies that inform the seminal film music statements. We find in these a seemingly unwavering faith in commerce (Hollywood and its apologists), or in communism (the early statements of the Soviet modernists), or in the ineffability of abstract music (Romantic elements of the music community). The certainty in these statements is undeniably appealing, and dangerous as well, and it is still present in the trenches of media production and public perception. As it was in the early debates, so it is sometimes today; salesmen and artists and their respective defenders can all be restricted by platitudinous self-images, which not incidentally distort their notions of the other side. And scholars, myself included, are not immune, as these last, slightly monolithic