

might the reader conform to these principles? Having asked these questions, the reader/viewer simply, and humbly, tries to learn.<sup>46</sup>

This strategy is of course familiar from the writings of André Bazin. Bazin felt that, though medium specificity (Rudolf Arnheim, the Soviets) had been important at one point, the cinema was mature enough to stop having to separate itself from the other arts. He allowed for the occasional subordination of cinematic impulse to a preexisting text, sensibility, or philosophy. With such subordination, the other element of the equation could not only be recontextualized in an enlightening fashion, but film itself could be enriched as well.<sup>47</sup> The implications for considering classical music in film in this way are obvious.

Lewis and Bazin bring us to other complementary strategies. The title of Susan Sontag's influential essay "Against Interpretation" (1964) offers a rebuttal to overly fussy film musician prescription. Sontag suggests that to interpret is to wrest or justify a work that requires neither. Interpretation is not absolute, and

in most modern instances, interpretation amounts to the philistine refusal to leave the work of art alone. Real art has the capacity to make us nervous. By reducing the work of art to its content and then interpreting *that*, one tames the work of art. Interpretation makes art manageable, comfortable.<sup>48</sup>

With regard to our present topic we might admit that classical music can clearly make some film types uncomfortable. We might then suggest that this discomfort, or the attempt to legislate for the sake of its elimination, finally, harmfully limits film itself. Opening eyes (or ears) can open up the medium. "The function of criticism should be to show *how it is what it is*, even *that it is what it is*, rather than to show *what it means*."<sup>49</sup>

David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson have developed these strategies in their wide-ranging neoformalist studies. Without advocating an absolute end to interpretation, Bordwell suggests "that art is an affair of perception, and as such it presents the perceiver with problems of unity and disunity." But these problems need not be solved; conflicts in art are frequently unresolved, and struggle and strangeness are not stages to pass through, but valid destinations. Instead of finding meaning that delimits, Bordwell seeks to articulate, to explicate, and to leave open aesthetic experience.<sup>50</sup>