

much like that other font of raging passion and melodramatic excess, Italian opera.²⁶

These then are authorial programs, specific choices that lead to important chains of association. The level of specificity is important. A loose idiomatic identification—that sounds like classical music—will lead to a particular response; the more particular the identification, the more complex and interesting the effects that can be traced.²⁷

AFTER INTENTION: PRAGMATISM, OBSCURITY, INADEQUACY

Work-specific considerations can, of course, have elitist implications, as a certain amount of experience and sophistication are required to negotiate these intertextual byways. This is one reason that artist-first interpretive approaches are not always sufficient. Furthermore, as we move from the artist's program to that surrounding a spectator's interpretation and experience, we encounter instances where authorial autonomy breaks down, and where his or her intent becomes less important. Proper appreciation of musical uses in these instances depends on an awareness of purely practical motivations, very personal and even idiosyncratic or incommunicable musical choices, and the possibility of unconscious, accidental, or even inept selection.

Musical quotation often has fairly mundane motivations, and in these cases it is not so much creativity as the plainly practical that leads to certain musical uses. This circumstance applies to specific films, and even to dominant patterns of use during certain periods.

The use of classical music in the silent cinema illustrates this latter point. A 1917 decision in the U.S. Supreme Court granted composers royalties for public performances. Charles Berg suggests that this decision led to a further dependence on public-domain compositions from the standard repertoire. Since public performance of compositions by living composers would now force studios and theaters to pay for the privilege, the classics now emerged as the most economical business option. Whatever serendipitous meanings might arise from the silent period juxta-