

my choices, and the quest for general rules which *might* justify a particular choice.”<sup>66</sup>

Alternatively, those rules might *not* justify the choice. Jean Vigo wrote of Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí’s *Un Chien Andalou* (1928).

I have met M. Luis Buñuel only once and then only for 10 minutes, and our meeting in no way touched upon *Un Chien Andalou*. This enables me to discuss it with that much greater liberty. Obviously my comments are entirely personal. Possibly I will get near, without doubt I will commit some howlers.<sup>67</sup>

Howlers are possible, if that means differing from an author’s intent. But if the reader is an author as well, especially with a work as provocatively open-ended as Buñuel’s, or Godard’s, film, then “mistake” comes to mean something altogether different, if it means anything at all.

Gino Stefani reminds us that

musicians and musicologists have a tendency to neglect or even to deny the semantic thickness of techniques; thus they consider music essentially as the production of objects and events. But for our society as a whole, for its general competence in music, music is always the production of signs. It is therefore particularly important here to consider *ordinary people*, what they think and feel about musical “language”, and what they do with it.<sup>68</sup>

Jean Jacques Nattiez begins his discussion of musical sound and noise by subdividing it, distinguishing between “poietic” (composer choice), “neutral” (physical realities, sound waves, etc.) and “esthetic” (perceptive judgment) categories.<sup>69</sup> In Nattiez’s model experiences with and analyses of music shift according to the level, though of course all the levels operate and interrelate simultaneously. Against general assumptions in the musical community, there is no hierarchy implied here.

This is an essential point, as the experience of the hearer is especially important in the experience and understanding of classical music in film. To an important degree, what the audience viewer thinks and feels when music meets image is the correct interpretation.

Just as Marx’s prescriptions and predictions were not equal to his difficult-to-deny descriptions of the class struggle, so too