

Chapter two's aesthetes note that both these forms of subordination ultimately diminish the music, as well as its setting, all resulting in a fatal underdetermination. The results are a closing off of musical meaning and musical feeling, all through an excess of concrete reference. According to this view program and film would be a nefarious binding of the worst in nineteenth- and twentieth-century musical practice.

I would like to propose a contrary view, which is that music, especially placed narratively, can also resist the restrictions of musical muzzlings and excessive subordination. It was not in prescribing programs, but in seeking to limit their effects that Liszt was unduly timid. Music, even, especially with some extramusical prologue, is automatically overdetermined. This overdetermination may imperil the dictionary definition of program, but it opens up rich metaphorical possibilities.

Summarizing to this point, program music is *like* film music. As with film and counterpoint, this statement has both literal and figurative meaning. First, as with Beethoven's, Berlioz's or Liszt's original compositions, specially composed film music requires narrative elements external to it to be fully comprehensible. Second, appropriated compositions—source music—bring with them programmatic information, relating not only to specific pieces and their composers, but also to entire historical settings, institutions, and ideologies.

Was Rachmaninov responding to the extramarital affair of a London doctor and a suburban housewife when he wrote his Second Piano Concerto?¹⁹ Certainly not, but the core of this analogy is that program is contained not only in what is intended, but also by what is apprehended. Regardless of what the composer was thinking, or even what motivated the filmmakers, the juxtaposition of source music and the motion picture creates overtones of ideology and history and effects a multiplication of meaning.

Program music's inexact, semimetaphorical relation and similarity to film music illuminates a great number of film music contexts. Some of these are literal, practical ones.

Since music that suggested an emotional mood, created atmosphere, or imitated a natural sound was prized by the film musician, program music of one sort or another was the standard accompaniment for the silent film.²⁰