

This was, and remains, the rationale behind program music. Bernstein uses words to preach the gospel of edifying music, thus bringing light to the musically darkened. In this sense program becomes an agent of equality, as it establishes common terms on which initiates and neophytes alike can meet.

As Goepf suggested, however, sometimes talk of democracy can merely signal the rising of the rabble. The perceived limitation of program was that it nailed down the ineffable by prosaic equivalencies. The process suggested a kind of dread medium crossing counterpoint. The prosaic mind, by means of the prosaic sentence, took the poetry of the musical phrase and, through literal means, translated it again into prose. Here, many felt, was a prescription for philistinism.

But that was just one view. Could not program also be seen as an Aristotelian transformation, by which the familiar was made fresh and new? And if the material is not familiar, then there is, at least, communication.

The significance of these ideas to classical music in film is obvious. The criticisms cited in my first three chapters are still important, but the receptive transformation I have just suggested also allows for a complete and salutary reversal of attitude.

The borrowing or symbiotic exchange between the fine, popular, and folk arts has indeed been beneficial for American culture as a whole by broadening the exposure of every aesthetic level, encouraging many to seek out and experience the original forms, and making some headway in breaking down the class barriers that are inherent in the social predilection for stratifying art and culture.⁸³

Exception was not always taken to accessible music. Schubert wrote music that his friends and he himself could play. Chopin's etudes, which have become the property of virtuosi, were written as studies for amateurs.⁸⁴ Before Paganini's rise in the 1820s, music was, allowing for certain social inaccessibilities, for all. The rise of the concert hall, and the end of patronage, and the necessity for the artist to make himself distinct and thus make his financial way, for example, took music out of amateur's hand.⁸⁵

The record is not complete without this contextualization. In reaction to art's separating itself from the people came the rise of the concept of extrinsic meaning in music, of the program.