Musical Stimulacra Are Narrative(s)

Music beyond Sound in Concert Program Notes

Ivan Delazari

Abstract

This chapter explores the contribution of verbal texts to the narrative potential of untexted music. It argues that concert program notes may conditionally become vehicles of musical narrativity insofar as their readers at classical music venues are prepared to identify the content of each annotation as the content of the annotated piece. Program notes are regarded as *musical stimulacra* (sic): they *stimulate* the readers' interest in the annotated music and encourage them to *simulate* each composition mentally. Providing readers with verbal narratives about the musical works on the program, these supplementary verbal surrogates of music can be considered as prompts or cues of musical narrativity because they affect the way listeners make sense of the performed compositions in storylike terms. Even a minimal impact of program notes on the readers' sensitivities may allow for classical music to be heard and remembered more distinctly than would otherwise be the case. The chapter addresses several samples from the St. Petersburg Philharmonia library collection of program notes to illustrate the basic narrative strategies program annotators adopt – most importantly, mapping the music on the background storyline of the composer's life and work and representing tonal procedures and features as acting and visible narrative entities.

1 Introduction

This chapter explores the contribution of verbal texts to the narrative potential of untexted music. It argues that concert program notes may conditionally become vehicles of musical narrativity insofar as their readers at classical music venues are prepared to identify the content of each annotation as the content of the annotated piece. Program notes are regarded as "musical stimulacra" (sic): they *stimulate* the readers' interest in the annotated music and encourage them to *simulate* each composition mentally before listening to it. Providing readers with verbal narratives about the musical works on the program, these optional, even marginal verbal surrogates of music can be considered as prompts or cues of narrativity in the music because they affect the way listeners make sense of the performed compositions in storylike terms. Even

a minimal impact of program notes on the readers' sensitivities may allow for classical music, in the broadest sense of the term, to be heard and remembered more distinctly than would otherwise be the case. Once the audience establishes a connection between the annotation and the actual piece of music, the former begins to infuse and inform the latter with narrative elements that are much easier to memorize or reproduce in some form than the audible but complex form of a symphony or a concerto.

In its original sense, I delineated the concept of musical stimulacra as passages of *fiction* that, through narrative form or content, prompt readers to experience music vicariously, in a variedly intense mode of mental simulation (see Delazari xiv-xviii). Literary prose that features music-related subjects and/or imitates musical structures was theorized comprehensively in Werner Wolf's *The Musicalization of Fiction* (1999), which deliberately avoids reader-response issues. Rethinking "musicalized fiction" as "musical stimulacra" addresses those issues by leaning on the approaches to narrative immersion developed in cognitive narratology. If fiction engages readers with experiences from its imaginary universe, so do stories about music and musicians. Such stories, however, are not confined to literary narrative. This chapter extends the initial boundaries of musical stimulacra to embrace *non*-fictional accounts of music.

Unlike novels, concert program notes – leaflets or booklets distributed at classical music venues to introduce the audience to the performed repertory – are normally too short and fragmented to create immersive narrative storyworlds. Apart from listing the scheduled titles of musical works and movements, they often comprise biographical information about the composers, conductors, soloists, and orchestras as well as critical overviews of the pieces of music to be performed. As a handy reference source, such compilations invite selective browsing rather than close reading from beginning to end. The entire document may be quite stimulating for its reader's concert anticipations by identifying contributing parties (*characters*), outlining its schedule (*time*), and creating the general atmosphere of the event, but it is particularly the entries on individual pieces, under their eponymous headings, that may function as musical stimulacra. Either written by or adapted from professional musicologists, annotations to specific works are not meant to substitute the music textually (as the case tends to be with fiction), but they supplement it with a paratextual "threshold" of interpretation (cf. Genette 1–2) and, in that sense, determine the reader's perception of each corresponding piece. Writers of program notes construct a brief verbal narrative about the announced composition. By pointing out selected technical, affective, narrative, and contextual properties of the music, these annotations stimulate readers to build a mental image of the work to stand alongside the actual performance. Once

some equivalence between the performed piece and the annotated subject is assumed, verbal and musical notes intermingle.

Every musical work has an origin story: how and why it was composed, how it relates to music history, who performs it first, and what makes it meaningful for the times to come. Yet among the infinite variety of phenomena that characterize the piece either literally, through the technical provisions of its score, or figuratively, by its presumable rapport with its creator's biographical circumstances (*metonymy*) and with any external imagery the music may resemble (*metaphor*), some of those phenomena are more narrative than others. For example, a celebrity's life is arguably more like a story than a single mental picture evoked by a particular musical phrase or a whole harmonic progression. Concert program annotations provide perceptual and interpretive aids for non-expert listeners of classical music by integrating the heterogeneous formal, semantic, and contextual aspects of musical compositions into a narrative model. That model might be neither correct nor exclusive, but it amplifies the audience's spontaneous narrativization of the music and channels it toward a more musicologically informed listening experience than a fleeting sequence of idiosyncratic "imaginary content analogies" (Wolf, *Musicalization* esp. 58). Musical stimulacra thus manipulate their readers. However, as the argument below aspires to demonstrate by addressing several samples from the St. Petersburg Philharmonia library collection of program notes, the manipulation does not ruin the music. Instead, those notes seek to serve as a mere point of departure for musical experience. Those in no need of such an aid are free to ignore it.

2 Theoretical Background

As Lawrence Kramer contends, two things we do to music apart from listening to it are to "mimic the music and [to] talk about it" (39). In a sense, composing and performing are forms of mimicking that are more elaborate than one's out-of-tune whistling, but verbal references to music also have their mimetic dimension. In a reading listener's embodied mind, the words about music trigger musical imagery and partake in a cognitive exchange with the "actual" experiences of (making sense of) music (see Delazari xvi, 14–5). Read in spatial and temporal proximity to the performance, program notes preview or echo the structured sound of the annotated piece.

Writers of fiction incorporate music into characters' lives and discursive techniques, which exposes readers to vicarious musical experiences through empathy and mental simulation. Passages that either render musical

compositions, performances, and recollections or suggest analogies between textual and musical structures appeal to the reader's musical sensitivities. As a result, a mental image of music accumulates itself in the mind, which may further result in a strong urge to listen to actual music and thus intensify the musical impression (see Delazari 65).

The audience's desire to listen, which brings one to a music venue in the first place, may be buttressed by the printed materials shortly before it is satisfied by the concert per se. The perceptual presence of the performed work in the same setting in which perusal of the musical stimulacrum occurs gives program notes an extra charge of experientiality, so the writer's eloquence in inspiring musical imagery in the reader's mind is less decisive here than in a "musicalized" novel. The narrativity of music is thus mediated – even substituted and, in a sense, resolved – by the more readily narrative parameters of the annotation. Even if we reject Eero Tarasti's stance that music in general is "a fundamentally narrative art" by virtue of its constructive properties (283), it might be difficult to deny that any verbal description of particular music, including Tarasti's, will infuse it with narrative coordinates. In an expert's and a layperson's languages, signposts of some entities changing their states along the temporal dimension of music will inescapably be identified. In other words, the verbal (literary) medium, which Wolf considers as *strongly narrative* because it approaches prototypical narrative most closely on a gradable scale of narrativity ("Transmedial Narratology"; see also chapter 3 of this volume by Wolf), imposes its own storylike features on the music. The signs printed on the program pages will merge and interact with the sounds of the performance, shaping a common signified in the listener's mind. If we admit that language and narrative in general are pervasive cognitive tools of human understanding and memory, verbal narrativizations are one way of experiencing the non-verbal in a narrative way. Telling us a story about the music and/or decrypting a story the music itself might be telling us, concert annotations supplement the music without replacing it and affect our musical experience by making it more definite and memorable.

The "Triangular Iceberg of Musical Experience" model (Delazari 21) attempts to reconcile some opposing philosophies of music and its narrative potential by mapping them onto a common terrain. The model indicates that physical sound – the most widely accessible form of music – is only the tip of the iceberg (A). In Roman Ingarden's phenomenological (10–15) and Roger Scruton's analytic (74–5) aesthetics, the musical work is divorced from its performance: somewhat counterintuitively, music is *not* sound at all but something entirely *beyond* sound. Below the water surface, the base of the "Iceberg" triangle stretches between its other two apices: one conceptualizes music as

metaphorical movement of tonal entities through an abstract acousmatic space guided by a purely formal logic (B), while the other translates the sonic signals (A) and the tonal procedures (B) into concrete cinematic images closest to conventional narratives – with characters and events in imaginary storyworld settings (C). Unlike the definitions of music prioritizing among those extremes, the "Triangular Iceberg" model suggests that actual listening experiences are negotiations of all three, in proportions determined by the listener's musical background and formal training.

The three sides of musical experience are neither isolated nor mutually excluding. In fact, there is a circularity to the way they are inter-translatable, which could be illustrated by the following *Bildungs*-metanarrative:

– A child is exposed to musical sounds along with all other noises (A).
– The child learns to tell musical sounds from non-musical ones within a given musical culture and use metaphorical language to describe it, e.g. "high" and "low", "Peter", or "wolf" in the eponymous Sergey Prokofiev (A+C).
– At another stage of musical education, the young person might be introduced to performance practices and such abstract notions as notes, melodies, scales, chords, keys, registers, dynamics, and progressions (B+A).
– In learning more about music, the person faces figurative language describing sounds and formal elements through emotional context and narrative imagery, usually through explanatory verbalization, e.g. "the invasion theme returns" in Dmitri Shostakovich's *Seventh Symphony* or "here comes the opera section" in QUEEN's "Bohemian Rhapsody" (B+C+A).
– If one proceeds to acquire the performative and perceptive skills of a music professional – composer, critic, theorist, and so on – the acousmatic hearing displaces the acoustic and cinematic ones as redundant, and a silent study of the score may suffice (B).

Other anecdotal trajectories could be drawn to illustrate the same theoretical point. For example, the trajectory above may include replacement of the Western diatonic idiom with an alternative one, up to the extreme end of the spectrum where one recognizes any combination of accidental sounds registered under given conditions as music (a total relapse to A). As such, it is clear that the "Iceberg" angles are interdependent; they engage in forms of interconnected, circular motion.

An important consequence of the circularity of this model is that a similar motion exists in verbalizations of music, where the three components of musical experience are manifest in vocabulary and grammar. We may notice that even the abstract language of music theory is never purely descriptive and retains a degree of narrativity insofar as sentences with subjects and verbs notate certain events, and melodic parts and harmony are said to interact.

Scored timbral properties and dynamic characteristics of sound are also the subjects of such refined descriptions. Additionally, less technical narrativizations of a musical piece by a "naïve listener" deeply touched by it emotionally also exist. These often reflect some of the "objective" structural logic that the piece reveals to an advanced expert.

In fiction, musicology, or casual conversation, verbal renditions of music also reflect that fundamental complexity of how music functions in human life. Music is never just pure sound, pure form, or pure story. Musical events are bound to verbal and visual, historical and geographical, social and emotional contexts. Words do enter our experience of listening to music, and no refined abstract thinking about music can be achieved without language and narrative. Framed with words, sounds become more structured, musical ideas more explicit, and dormant stories emerge to make music more meaningful to even the most abstract-minded of us.

Concert program annotations are targeted primarily at laypersons, but nonetheless interested listeners. Such an annotation typically contains some background information about and a reduced approximation of the musical work, pointing out climactic moments and offering a general model to structure the listening. The aid is optional: not everyone purchases the program and reads it, while those who do might be affected by it in fairly different ways. At the end of the night, though, the notes contribute to keeping music around.

3 Note on Corpus

Concert annotations differ across musicological cultures and individual venues. Instead of hypothesizing what could be found in such annotations globally, this chapter leans on partial archival research into the program leaflets and booklets collected at the Library of St. Petersburg Academic Philharmonia named after D. D. Shostakovich. How do annotators – anonymous compilers and prominent musicologists – represent music in such notes? Do they always narrativize it while simultaneously attempting to be faithful to a potential narrative outline stipulated by formal parameters of the score, or do their verbal reproductions of music digress from the score to extra-musical phenomena? The answers to these questions formulated in this study are neither universal nor statistically verified, since its material is local and processing methods are restricted to my close reading of a selection of annotations. Yet even several hundred fragments devoted to specific musical works demonstrate particular trends that are summarized in the subsequent sections and illustrated with a few examples.

The St. Petersburg Philharmonia Library holds a complete stock of concert program leaflets and brochures from the centennial history of the concert hall, which was established by the Bolshevik cultural authorities in 1921. When the former St. Petersburg Noble Assembly building was turned into a public music performance venue, the Bolsheviks regarded it as a powerful means of providing the working class with the best of its former exploiters' high culture. As the first Philharmonia chief conductor Nikolai Andreyevich Malko explains in 1928, the concert hall opened access to symphony orchestra music to mass audiences (9–10). To accomplish that enlightenment project, concerts became supplemented with introductory lectures by musicologists, serialized according to trends and themes in music history, and supplied with printed materials to equip listeners with a vocabulary for claiming the Western music heritage. Not every Philharmonia program dating back a hundred years contains annotations of all items on each night's repertoire, and the layout and size of the annotations vary over time. However, the annotating standard set by the founding father of Soviet musicology Boris Asafiev, alias Igor Glebov, in the 1920s and 30s, is still traceable in the extracts and compilations from contemporary music critics in the recent Philharmonia booklets.

Asafiev's multi-page critical brochures on Tchaikovsky, Scriabin, and Glazunov were enclosed with the program listings on the nights when those composers' works were performed. They were reprinted for as long as the state-funded Philharmonia could afford it, under the label of its own press, nationalized as everything else was in the Soviet Union. As the concert repertoire increased while the state funding did not, program leaflets between the 1940s and 90s would be supplemented with just one or two very short annotations covering only part of the night's repertoire, depending on which compositions had corresponding annotations in stock, and giving no credit to writers. In the late 1990s, glossy colorful brochures sponsored by private and corporate advertisers replaced the minimalist leaflets, now leaving more space to performers' accolades and photographs than to musicological remarks on the performed works. Still, the inclusion of such annotations has been Philharmonia's consistent institutional policy all along. Since this chapter's focus is on narratological and not historical issues, diachronic trends in the annotating styles are considered here only insofar as they affect the notes' narrative features. While some of those features recur, a certain standard of what to listen *for* is set and passed over to the audience.

The patterns discussed below are inferred from the Philharmonia main stage (*Bolshoi zal*) programs of 1921, 1969, and 2019. The three years are samples of a century-long history that were randomly chosen as representations of its early, middle, and present periods. The findings below appear to delineate those

narrative characteristics of program annotations that are not subject to historical, socio-economic, or other contextual constraints. No statistical methods to quantify and subdivide them into classes of a comprehensive typology have been applied. For now, it suffices to indicate that the collection at the library or any similar stock of annotated concert programs may provide more precise and formalized data on how music is narrativized. The following sections only contain prolegomena for a more comprehensive study. They display two features that concert program annotations impose on instrumental music, whose immanent narrativity, as this volume's Part I attests, has always been subject to some doubt.

4 Program Notes as Embedded Narratives of Biography and Creation

The narrative scenario we repeatedly encounter in the Philharmonia program notes presents musical works as embedded narratives with several narratorial entities claiming to communicate to the reader and listener directly. The fact that each annotation is narrated by a critic or compiler tends to be camouflaged by the annotator's status as a non-fictionist. The music – the subject matter of program notes – is real, as the concert performance is expected to demonstrate shortly. The composer who wrote it is real too, as the dates and facts across the notes efficiently testify. Judgments and assertions about the music become automatically charged with a degree of the same factuality. The annotator pretends to be absent from such an objectivistic account of the musical work and delegates narratorial responsibilities to a represented subject – most typically, the annotated composer as the character of his own life and narrator in his own music.[1] The writer of the notes relates biographical data about the composer as unmediated facts, which the composer "tells" by living them through and reflecting them in music. As a result, the reader is encouraged to transcend the act of reading momentarily and occupy a receptive position within the realm of the annotation, whose storyworld is supposed to be a past state of the real world the reader also inhabits. Thus, composers become diegetic narrators speaking directly to listeners in a musical language, which annotations pre-translate to readers for smooth concert communication. This habitual manipulation, of which both the writers and the readers may well remain unaware, convinces the reader that the annotation is authorized to speak on the composer's behalf. The story of how and why

1 In the three-year sample, there is not a single female composer performed on the main stage of the Philharmonia, hence "his".

the composer came to create the piece intermingles with the story *in* the piece even though no explicit claim is made that those two stories are identical. The reader is now encouraged to take an engaged position with respect to the narrative the music tells and acquire the unique emotional, cultural, and historical experience the music is said to transmit. Anything that might be fictional in either the music or its verbal narrativization is circumnavigated by the deliberate obscuring of the embedded structure. The embeddedness is hidden by the annotator because they insist on their reliance on biographical and historical data as well as the actual music score.

A critic may thus prescribe grammatically that the listener's supposed emotions are the properties of the work itself, whereby the reader is challenged to experience them for real. Consider Marina Malkiel's 2019 exegesis of Pyotr Tchaikovsky's violin concerto in D major: "In the first movement, what is felt is not anthemic delight but nervous excitement. It then finds a resolution in the sorrowful Canzonette" (6).[2] The figure of the experiencer is hidden in the passive voice, but the reader is unmistakably the one who is prescribed to feel what is rendered as objective properties of the music. The reader's assumed position as a concert audience member determines by default that the borders between the musical storyworld and the listener's feelings are transparent. We are assigned the role of a participatory witness to the musical story, where, predictably, the composer is our interlocutor and the major storytelling entity in charge. The narrativity in this example is only weakly induced, as is the case with the medium of instrumental music in general. Or, to put it in Wolf's terms, in both Tchaikovsky and Malkiel, narrativity mainly relies on a "core narreme" of experientiality (see "Transmedial Narratology" 261–2, 279).

Two extra considerations are relevant to this case. First, in Monika Fludernik's celebrated and widely disputed "natural" narratology, experientiality is not *a* core but *the* core of narrativity. It is an important foundation to musical narrativity (see Hauer) competing with Tarasti's structuralist and Wolf's transmedial categories ("Transmedial Narratology"). Once the opening of Tchaikovsky's concerto is associated with "nervous excitement" and the "Canzonette" is identified as "sorrowful" (Malkiel 6), it no longer matters what exactly happens in the hypothetic storyworld to induce those emotional states. The experience is communicated, so its seminal details such as particular actions/events and agents/characters are replaced irreversibly with their affective substitutes.

2 Program booklets have no pagination. For this chapter, pages are numbered skipping the "cover" with the photo and logo of the hall and starting from the left side page of the first spreadsheet. Where annotations come separately from the program on two- or four-page sheets enclosed, the reconstructed pagination starts from the beginning of the sheet.

The narrative of internal experience overrides its external narrative cause. Second, in Malkiel's verbalization of the Tchaikovsky, Wolf's other basic narremes of representationality and meaningfulness are delivered: Tchaikovsky's movement represents the composer's as well as our own feelings, which are meaningful to us insofar as we experience them. Grammatically, the annotator omits the feeling subjects, reattributing the emotions to a musical storyworld as its objectified events. The affects of excitement and sorrow are *what happens in* the music: they are now the *facts* of the Tchaikovsky concerto, not its arbitrary *effects* on the audience. Yet by naming the feelings, the text implies the feeling subjects and encourages the reader to enact the emotions in subsequent listening, when each affective event is to occur in the performed work itself.

Annotations habitually open with an indication of the causal connection between the composer and the music: biographical information about the composer is incorporated into all of them. In biographical emplotment, which is the most obvious technique of narrativizing instrumental music (see Kivy 3–4; Neubauer 120), the composer is the implied narrator of and the overt character in the (auto)biographical story the annotator ascribes to him. The narrated experience may well be musical, since, after all, composition is a large part of a composer's life. At stake are the composer's feelings expressed in and motored by the music: it is not that a feeling comes first, and then it is signified musically, but it crystallizes *in* the music, to which the event of creation is essential.

The Philharmonia program notes suggest that the main interpretive key to classical music for popular educational use is borrowed from the Romantic Age: the work is fundamentally a portal to the personality of a genius, though it does not tell us what the genius liked for breakfast. Instead, as Asafiev puts it in his brochure reused in several Philharmonia seasons featuring Tchaikovsky's orchestral repertoire, music both encrypts "the main line of [Tchaikovsky's] creative development" and provides a clue to "the crypts and stashes of his life" (Glebov 3). There is an ideal correlation, even equivalence, between the composer's life and his *oeuvre*. In Asafiev, this correlation rests on the concept of *symphonism*, which is neither a generic feature of all symphonies nor an instrumentational quality of orchestral works but the omnipresent "organic development", a correlation between "quantitative multiplicity and qualitative tension", i.e., "the main impetus of musical motion [...] striving to restore the rhythmic, dynamic, and tonal balance of sound that is being repeatedly violated" (Glebov 5). The terms in which Asafiev defines symphonism are abstract but narrative, even narratological: like a story, "musical texture is nothing but a combination of incessant alterations between balance – violation of

balance – restoration of balance" (Glebov 5). Life maintains the same pattern, and the composer's mind functions accordingly. Thus music, somewhat counterintuitively, determines and objectifies the composer's accidental experiences and personal emotions. Asafiev's section on Tchaikovsky's works depicts Tchaikovsky's compositional practices on particular occasions as contributions to a grand metanarrative beyond the composer's control: while the "explosive flexibility of the first theme in the opening movement of the *Fourth Symphony* strives to avoid a cadence completion", the "disturbing image of the hostile external power, so distinct in the *Fourth* and *Fifth Symphonies*, has disappeared completely from the *Sixth*, which was finished shortly before the composer's death" (Glebov 13, 18). Symphonism embeds the life of a composer. For example, Tchaikovsky, who narrates his version and part of that grand design in his individual works, is a character in his own music.

In later program notes by Philharmonia annotators, such as the anonymous 1968 introduction of Ludwig van Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony enclosed with the concert program of 1 June 1969 ("Людвиг ван Бетховен"), the profound assumptions of Asafiev's organicist phenomenology of music are reproduced rather reductively, whereupon the transcendental narrative of universal symphonism disappears behind the composer's more mundane self. The annotator regards the *Sixth Symphony* as a chapter in the unfolding story of Beethoven's "life and work", to use a critical cliché, in which events are individual compositions created under specific circumstances. For example, Beethoven's birdsong is presented as though it was once truly Beethoven's own experience that he later supposedly narrated in the famous *Pastoral* score. Readers of the program notes thus assume that Beethoven's music in performance allows them to vicariously witness the life of its creator, both as a genius and a rural walker. A series of structural repeats, twists and turns of themes, rhythms, dynamics, and timbres all become the composer's narratorial self-projections. The narrative is intersubjective – so that when the annotator renders its plot, it is "man", not "Beethoven", who "leaves town, walks the forest, rests near a stream, and hears the voices of birds" ("Людвиг ван Бетховен" 1). In short, what program notes never fail to do is to place a human subject into the narrative center of the musical action and offer the reader and/as listener to identify with a diegetic stance in the musical story, which belongs initially to the composer. To facilitate the flow of narrative imagery, St. Petersburg Philharmonia programs from the 1990s to this day publish composers' portraits. The journey of listening to music integrates the experience of looking into the composer's eyes, while the story expressed in program notes is the one that the composer simultaneously narrates, stage-directs, and acts in, through melodic figures and harmonic moves.

With less overtly programmatic pieces, correlations between sound, form, and narrative imagery are still readily found, while the biographical embedding is always at hand to provide specific historical clues to symphonic narratives. For example, Sergey Slonimsky's 1966 annotation of Prokofiev's *Sixth Symphony*, which we find enclosed with the concert listing of 5 October 1969, reproduces the standard narrative of Shostakovich's *Seventh*: in the opening movement, listeners are assigned to hear a struggle between German military marches and a Russian folk song standing for the people's resistance to invaders depicted in an "invasion theme" (Slonimsky 2), while Prokofiev's operas are mentioned (Slonimsky 3) to map the noted musical features on the storyline of the composer's overall creative development.

In a sense, program notes provide non-programmatic, absolute music compositions with what program music composers such as Richard Strauss or Hector Berlioz achieve in their paratextual cues about *Don Quixote* or *Symphonie fantastique* respectively, namely a functional narrative grid that a non-expert listener may utilize for parsing, interpreting, and emoting a piece of music much more intensively than by confronting it without such a narrative tool. Music philosophers may condemn such reliance on biographical listening as primitive or irrelevant (see Kivy 4; Scruton 144–5), but such standard musical stimulacra allow a non-expert audience to enter and experience classical music from the narrative corner (C) of the "Triangular Iceberg of Musical Experience" – an open door for some listeners that they might miss otherwise. In the Soviet musicological tradition, the composer's life and work are seen as different but mutually translatable parts of the same story, so biographical bias is not particularly seen as a digression from the music.

5 Musical Stimulacra as Negotiations Among Visual, Formal, and Sonic Entities

Annotations are not only external narratives of biography and creation: like fictional musical stimulacra, each tends to include portions of information from the other two apices of the "Iceberg". Addressing their presumably non-expert readership, program notes do use some technical terminology to account for the music's abstract form and refer to the expected auditory properties of the performed piece.

Stating that "unexpected tonal modulations are similar to sudden turns of the pathway that open unexpected perspectives on the same landscape" in the first movement of Beethoven's *Sixth* ("Людвиг ван Бетховен" 2), the annotator orients the reader toward an integrated listening of the symphony as a

narrative of landscape watching. The tonal events on the acousmatic side of musical experience are claimed to parallel familiar perceptive acts of a countryside *flaneur*. Contrary to Asafiev's musical essentialism, the music here is secondary to some tellable experience, whose hypothetical significance to the original experiencer – Beethoven himself – is long gone, but whose power to endure depends on the listener's capacity to reproduce mentally the same course of events and have the feelings those events evoke. Affecting the listener with what once might have been the composer's joys and sorrows now detached from his biographical self, music acquires the power to perpetuate experiences and transport its audiences to other times and places outside the concert hall at any moment of listening. "In the incessant flow of sporadic motifs, in the endless playing of the strings the immersive musical images arise" ("Людвиг ван Бетховен" 2): abstract notions are paired with specific sonorities associated with familiar instruments and more pastoral imagery of dancing peasants or waving trees joins in to complete the stimulacrum. In a single sentence, readers are taken naturally from sound to form to concrete image, witnessing Beethoven's thunder, lightning, and rainfall through orchestral fortissimo in the fourth movement. Narrativizing the fifth movement, the annotation registers a structural closure, equipping the listener to recall and retell the story of Beethoven's *Pastoral*. The effect of an average annotation is thus to draw our attention to the music by convincing us that even the visual imagery we may generate in mind-wandering is already there in the musical storyworld, and that in seeing things through sound, we are not distracted from but faithful to the musical essence of the piece, whose images, moods, events, and formal elements are scored and stored narratively *in* that music.

In the grammar and syntax of musical stimulacra, themes, motifs, and sonorities are said and pictured to perform various acts on each other, sometimes interchangeably, so every musical composition outlines a narrative track with a beginning, middle, and end embedded in the composer's life, his oeuvre, and music history. Fighting the stereotype that classical music is an esoteric mystery for the chosen few, musical stimulacra keep moving it toward a narrative clarity via words even though, in a strict sense, that clarity is a lie.

In light of the educational ambitions behind Philharmonia programming, the metamusical narrative is meant to be built from individual works by individual composers, so composers' names often stand for trends and styles of music. While noting down intertextual patterns, quotations, and allusions between Russian and Western musical idioms and presenting each composer's work as a contribution to the master narrative of classical music, concert programs apply their rhetorical arsenal to construct a less personalized musical history that comprises various stories on such foundations as, for instance,

the use of certain instruments. For example, in Vladimir Goryachikh's annotation to the concert program of 11 January 2019, the main character is the cello. Instead of two separate stories centered on the composers Tchaikovsky and Vielgorsky, whose cello works were performed that day, Goryachikh relates one story about the musical instrument on display that evening. As a result of such narrative combination, the composers are both either characters or episodes in the story told by and about the cello. The instrument, which is defined by its unique sonority, is also the source of the musical material, not vice versa: we are asked to listen for and recognize its voice, which provides the root for the story in each composition. Instead of exploiting the cinematic imagery from apex C of the "Triangular Iceberg" in another narrative of biography and creation, Goryachikh privileges the physical sound tip (A) of the Iceberg. The musical stimulacrum the writer constructs is filled with timbre, register, and dynamic characteristics of the cello. Such a defamiliarizing narrative strategy allows the annotator to restructure the audience's expectations in accordance with the thematic intention of the concert producers: the instrument is to speak for itself as diegetic narrator in the audience's presence, where they would normally be overshadowed by the composer's narratorial self. The material history of musical sound foregrounded in those notes, which appear to be quite exceptional,[3] resists the idealistic and essentialist aesthetics of pure music as sublime force of profoundly immaterial nature. The romantic myth of great composers as the only worthy heroes in music history is supplemented with a celebration of the actual sound and craft of the cello.

Goryachikh's deliberate transfiguration of two independent compositions into a narrative cycle featuring the cello as their common protagonist still focuses on the music, switching the reader's attention from the composers' lives each work is normally believed to express to a new sonic outline emerging through the concert program compilation. In that sense, Iosif Raiskin's introduction of Philip Glass' *Second Violin Concerto* to the Philharmonia concert attendees on 19 February 2019, is an even more radical exception notable in the light of this volume's interest in contemporary music (*see especially the discussions of Steve Reich's narrativity in Part IV*). Raiskin's reference is purely to musical form on the acousmatic end (B) of the "Iceberg". He contends that any minimalist composition is "assembled from an incessantly flowing sequence of gradually shifting patterns" (5). The rest of the annotation is the story of when, where, and how Glass composed the piece, so no attempt was made at connecting the sides of the "Iceberg" into a musical stimulacrum. As a result, the

3 In 1921, 1969, and 2019, no other instrument-themed programs were on the Philharmonia's listings.

annotation is what the program notes skeptics would argue all program notes are: a disposable addition to the music, a distraction from serious listening.

Had the Philharmonia accommodated more contemporary repertory on top of its habitual classics, annotations in the form of bio notes on composers rather than musical stimulacra integrating life and music would probably be more common. Raiskin's refusal to narrativize Glass' score may be related to the doctrine about minimalism's non-narrativity – an existing stereotype that other chapters in this volume also undermine. Suffice it here to give one contradictory example to this common belief, namely Glass' stable success as a film composer, whose music contributes highly to its respective films' narrativity. In addition, the conceptual limitation Scruton establishes with respect to his central concept of the acousmatic space is that the internal logic of the tonal movement in that space only works for the diatonic idiom, where tones do necessitate, presuppose, and direct one another (see Scruton 281, 285) – quite narratively, as we have noticed. Even though Glass's idiom is generally diatonic, his tonal developments are aborted through repetition, so there is indeed little Raiskin could tell his readers about the music that would not be heard immediately in the musical texture itself – a self-evident recurrence of elements that could be associated with anything at all but nothing in particular beyond their own sound. Of the three sides of the "Triangular Iceberg" – namely, the sound, the form, and the concrete narrative imagery – only the form, the "gradually shifting patterns" (Raiskin 5), remains relevant to the musical experience.

6 Conclusion

The program notes accompanying thousands of performances that took place in St. Petersburg Philharmonia activate the narrative potential of music through musical stimulacra. A comparison between program notes and music-representing passages of fiction may reveal more similarities than differences. However, one difference is perhaps that the musical works are performed subsequent to their verbal surrogates in space and time. As such, the annotations on concert programs might impact their readers more directly and efficiently since many of the entities those notes render can be matched with actual phenomena happening promptly in the concert hall. Still, similar to musical stimulacra in novels that "have no obligations of being faithful to their 'originals'" (Delazari 138), the sections of the program leaflets or brochures that thematize each work directly never attempt to reconstruct the composition in full. Instead, they tend to alternate between the composer's life story and the most

memorable turning points in the musical structure to make a consistent and continuous narrative out of both. Emotions that readers are "programmed" to experience while listening to the piece are attributed to the music itself. As a result, a typical communicative frame linking the composer as sender, the music as medium, and the audience as receiver of a narrative message emerges and is maintained throughout the annotation. Program notes are not novels, but despite their unexciting musicological origins and documentary, almost archival status, they seek to be no less appealing and immersive than their fictional counterparts.

The narrative language of program annotations as stimulacra addresses all the aspects of musical experience shown in the "Triangular Iceberg" (see Delazari 21). Most commonly, metaphorical and technical expressions of the annotation serve to build a connection between the music and its creator's biographical and artistic stance. In that case, both the concrete imagery invoked by tonal events and the abstract properties of form inferred from the score are related to stages of the composer's life and work. Now and then, references to timbral properties of musical sound made by certain instruments also contribute to that typical narrative design otherwise focused on the composer. On rare occasions, the focus shifts to a foregrounding of purely musical elements in special topic concert programs – for example, those devoted to musical instruments. Even though most annotations are biased in favor of classical score creators, they do not normally confine themselves to the role of mere biographical entries. Annotators aspire to have music and life inform one another and to tune the reader's expectations toward several aspects of musical experience. Listening to the same music would be different without reading those words. Mimicking the music mentally while going through its abbreviated verbal supplement, readers find new ways of making instrumental sound relevant to the stories in their minds. The favor may be returned, once the audience hears the work resonating with its verbal preview, so that the musical stimulacrum is true.

References

Delazari, Ivan. *Musical Stimulacra: Literary Narrative and the Urge to Listen*. Routledge, 2021.

Fludernik, Monika. *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology*. Routledge, 1996.

Genette, Gérard. *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. 1987. Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Glebov, Igor. "П. И. Чайковский (1840–1893) [P. I. Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)]." *Открытие государственной филармонии* [*The Opening of the State Philharmonia*], 12 June 1921, Petrograd, 1921, pp. 3–18.

Goryachikh, Vladimir. Program notes on Tchaikovsky's "The Tempest" and Mikhail Vielgorsky's Theme and Variations for Cello and Orchestra, and Tchaikovsky's Pezzo capriccioso for Cello and Orchestra. *Sankt-Peterburgskaia akademicheskaia filarmonia imeni D. D. Shostakovicha, Bolshoi zal, Sezon 2018–2019*, 11 Jan. 2019, St. Petersburg, pp. 5–7.

Hauer, Christian. "The Contribution of Musical Narratology to Contemporary Narratology. On Monika Fludernik's Concept of 'Experientiality'." *Amsterdam International Journal for Cultural Narratology*, no. 7–8, 2012–2014, pp. 187–207.

Ingarden, Roman. *The Work of Music and the Problem of Its Identity*. 1973. Translated by Adam Czerniawski, University of California Press, 1986.

Kivy, Peter. *Sound Sentiment: An Essay on the Musical Emotions, Including the Complete Text of The Corded Shell*. Temple University Press, 1989.

Kramer, Lawrence. "Signs Taken for Wonders: Words, Music, and Performativity." *Essays in Honor of Steven Paul Scher and on Cultural Identity and the Musical Stage*, edited by Steven Paul Scher, et al., Rodopi, 2002, pp. 34–47.

"Людвиг ван Бетховен (1770–1827). Шестая (Пасторальная) симфония, соч. 68 (1807–1808) [Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827). Sixth (Pastoral) Symphony, op. 68 (1807–1808)]" [leaflet]. Leningrad Philharmonia Press, 1968.

Malkiel, Marina. "Петр Чайковский. Концерт для скрипки с оркестром [Pyotr Tchaikovsky. The Violin Concerto]." *Sankt-Peterburgskaia akademicheskaia filarmonia imeni D. D. Shostakovicha, Bolshoi zal, Sezon 2018–2019*, 4 Feb. 2019, St. Petersburg, pp. 5–6.

Malko, Nikolai Andreyevich. "Задачи филармонии [The Tasks of the Philharmonia]." *Десять лет симфонической музыки 1917–1927* [*Ten Years of Symphony Music 1917–1927*], edited by Nikolai Andreyevich Malko et al., Leningrad, Izdanie gosudarstvennoi akademicheskoi filarmonii, 1928, pp. 6–18.

Neubauer, John. "Tales of Hoffmann and Others: On Narrativizations of Instrumental Music." *Interart Poetics: Essays on the Interrelations of the Arts and Media*, edited by Ulla-Britta Lagerroth et al., Rodopi, 1997, pp. 117–128.

Raiskin, Iosif. "Филип Гласс. Концерт № 2 для скрипки с оркестром [Philip Glass. Violin Concerto No. 2]." *Sankt-Peterburgskaia akademicheskaia filarmonia imeni D. D. Shostakovicha, Bolshoi zal, Sezon 2018–2019*, 25 Feb. 2019, St. Petersburg, 2019, p. 5.

Scruton, Roger. *The Aesthetics of Music*. Clarendon Press, 1997.

Slonimsky, Sergey. "С. Прокофьев (1891–1953). Шестая симфония ми бемоль минор, соч. 111 (1947) [S. Prokofiev (1891–1953). Sixth Symphony in E flat minor, op. 111 (1947)]" [leaflet]. Leningrad Philharmonia Press, 1966.

Tarasti, Eero. "Music as a Narrative Art." *Narrative across Media: The Languages of Storytelling*, edited by Marie-Laure Ryan, University of Nebraska Press, 2004, pp. 283–304.

Wolf, Werner. *The Musicalization of Fiction: A Study in the Theory and History of Intermediality*. Rodopi, 1999.

---. "Transmedial Narratology: Theoretical Foundations and Some Applications (Fiction, Single Pictures, Instrumental Music)." *Narrative*, vol. 25, no. 3, 2017, pp. 256–285.