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Abstract

Due to the relative obscurity of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche's piano music, it is of considerable interest to musicians in general and pianists in particular to become familiarized with this overlooked portion of Nietzsche's works. In order to do this, I propose to thoroughly study the body of works, evaluate their potential appeal to pianists, and present my findings. In so doing, I also hope to discover the relation between his philosophical works and their application in his music. Underneath this conceptual umbrella, several different areas will be researched, and I have undertaken to describe these potential avenues for research in this brief.

I am approaching this subject as perhaps many others who are aware of Nietzsche's musical output have approached it; that is by means of his philosophy. Nietzsche was first and foremost a thinker and throughout his writings you find an unusual capacity for disciplined, critical and intensive thought aimed at anything stumbling into his mental path. In this particular example, his writings on music far surpass his music both in sheer quantity and, as most critics charge, quality. To name just the larger works, *The Birth of Tragedy*, *The Gay Science*, *Nietzsche Contra Wagner*, and *The Antichrist* all deal at length with the subject of music. Add to that the numerous smaller essays, letters to friends, and the large correspondence between Nietzsche and Wagner, and you find that Nietzsche is unique among philosophers in the level of importance placed upon music. In contrast, his actual musical writings (recently compiled and published as *Der Musicalische Nachlass* by Curt Paul Janz) fill only one

volume, and if only complete works are taken into consideration, even less than that. Therefore, if Nietzsche himself wrote *about* music more than he *wrote* music, I will follow his lead and examine his philosophy first. As to the objection that music must stand on its own and not rely on external explanations for validation, I will not use this *brief* to get into such lengthy debates. In the more specific case of Nietzsche, he was a spiritual descendent of Hegel (antithetically), Schopenhauer, and for the early years of his life, an eager protégé of Richard Wagner. As with these thinkers, Nietzsche strongly felt that music *did* something, that it had aesthetic value insofar as it had cognitive value. Therefore if one does not know what the music is to do, one can hardly evaluate its effectiveness in reaching that goal.

Despite the far-ranging acceptance of Nietzsche and the accompanying translations scholars have carried out to expose others to Nietzsche's writings, many of his shorter essays and correspondences remain exclusively in their original German. This is especially applicable to his writings about his own music, which he never published and exist only in collected correspondences. A final arm of my research will delve into the relation of Nietzsche and Richard Wagner and use this understanding to shed light on Nietzsche's early musical works; those of which that were written during his infatuation with Wagner. Nietzsche's intense and volatile relationship with Wagner played such a large role in Nietzsche's life and thought that any investigation into his philosophical thought, let alone his musical thought, would be incomplete without delving into this "friendship."

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ABBREVIATIONS

BGE	<i>Beyond Good and Evil</i>
BT	<i>Birth of Tragedy</i>
CW	<i>The Case of Wagner</i>
D	<i>Daybreak</i>
EH	<i>Ecce Homo</i>
GS	<i>The Gay Science</i>
HKB I-IV	<i>Historische Kritische Briefe</i>
HK I-VI	<i>Historische Kritische Werke</i>
MN	<i>Friedrich Nietzsche: Der musikalische Nachlaß</i>
NCW	<i>Nietzsche Contra Wagner</i>
SL	<i>Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche</i>
TSZ	<i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i>
TI	<i>Twilight of the Idols: or, How one Philosophizes With a Hammer</i>
WM	<i>On Words and Music</i>
UW	<i>Unpublished Writings</i>

The works listed correspond to the complete citations found in the Works Consulted section. In accordance with style manuals, the first citation of each source is cited in full, and subsequent citations will use the above abbreviations.

Note: The accepted method of citing Nietzsche's published works is to indicate section numbers rather than page numbers, due to his unique style and the continuity of section numbers from one edition to another. In order to conform to Northwestern's bibliographical guidelines, I have chosen to cite both. The page number comes first, followed by a colon and then the section information.

e.g. TSZ, 317: IV, The Drunken Song, 1 – refers to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, page 317, book four, chapter entitled "The Drunken Song," section 1.

For his unpublished letters, journals and music, only page numbers are used.

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