

Approaching “Blast”

January 30, 2016

Music is gravely misunderstood and its power seriously underestimated by liberals. They are still human enough to enjoy some music or other, logically some kind of trash – and to see how much music matters to people just try telling them that theirs is trash. But in any case liberals’ subjectivist ideology, whereby man is the master of reality (up to and including Almighty God), makes them deny that there is anything objective about music. So for liberals there is no such thing as a composer using certain means to attain certain ends, and there can be no saying that any one piece or kind of music is “better” than another. Music, they will say, is purely a matter of the listener’s mood or taste – “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder,” and horribly discordant music is just as “good” as the most famous music from the past.

Of course such liberals are completely wrong. A Chinese proverb says that “when the mode of the music changes, the walls of the city shake,” a truth amply illustrated by the advent of Rock music in the 1950’s and 1960’s. Plato knew so well the moral influence of music for good or ill that in his ideal Republic certain kinds of music would have been banned. Woe to parents today who do not care what music their children listen to! “It’s only music,” they will say, and so saying they will deserve to lose their children to the Pied Pipers of Rock. Music is supremely important, and it is objective in nature – is it not common sense that all military music and no lullaby will emphasize rhythm? But what do liberals care for common sense? They are doing everything possible to wipe it out. It is too real for their dream.

A major turning-point in modern times between men’s recognition and their refusal of the objective order of reality planted by God in all his works was the French Revolution (1789–1794). Because Beethoven’s life straddled

that Revolution and gave to it its outstanding musical expression, some of his best-known works can be used to illustrate clearly certain objective truths concerning music. From Haydn and Mozart he inherited the objective order of the 18th century. To his successors it was mainly Beethoven who bequeathed the increasing musical disorder (not without its beauties) of the 19th century, to be followed by the musical chaos and disintegration (with exceptions) of supposedly “serious” music in the 20th and 21st centuries. Beethoven might then be called the grandfather or great-grandfather of Rock. That statement may so shock many a lover of Beethoven that it must immediately be qualified by saying that it took a great musician to launch the destruction of music.

Fast approaching – February 19 to 21 – is the “Beethoven Blast” to be held here in Broadstairs from the Friday 18h00, to the Sunday mid-day. A young American pianist who can sight-read nearly all of the 32 piano sonatas and Liszt’s piano versions for two hands of the nine symphonies, has offered to play as many of the sonatas as can be made to fit into one weekend, together with extracts from the symphonies chosen to illustrate the nature of music and how Beethoven works. The idea of the “Blast” originated in sheer self-indulgence, but then there occurred the temptation to throw it open to whoever might like either just to listen to the music (which should be a feast in itself for lovers of Beethoven), or to find out why liberals are so wrong, in music as in everything else.

So if anyone is interested besides readers who have already signed on, let them come between the times mentioned above. Bed and breakfast in the off-season of Broadstairs should be findable on the Internet, and if you let us know when you may plan to come, we may be able to manage in-house lunch and supper. In all things may God be served.

Kyrie eleison.