TO GLIMPSE THE SUN: A MYSTIC’S JOURNEY

Presented to the Faculty of
California State University, Chico

In Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Music

by

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Fall 2012
TO GLIMPSE THE SUN: A MYSTIC’S JOURNEY

A Project

by

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Fall 2012

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ABSTRACT

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Although the concepts of Plato’s Cave Allegory may be observed in many literary, theatrical and other multimedia works, they have never been the explicit inspiration of any instrumental music work. This project is a musical interpretation of Plato’s Allegory of the Cave; its focus is on the emotional journey of the mystical character of the allegory. I take the aesthetical view that such a journey would be fraught with pain and wonder and would eventually end in sorrow and loneliness.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As an undergraduate studying philosophy of religion, my studies began with Plato’s Allegory of the Cave. His conversational style appealed to me, it seemed to clarify the ideas by being inclusive, as if Plato was explaining his ideas specifically to me like he was my mentor.

It behooves the reader/listener to review the allegory, wouldn’t you agree?

Yes, absolutely.

Then here it is:

And now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: -- "Behold! Human beings living in an underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the den. Here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets."

"I see".

"And do you see", I said, "men passing along the wall carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone and various materials, which appear over the wall? Some of them are talking, others silent."

"You have shown me a strange image, and they are strange prisoners".

"Like ourselves", I replied. "And they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave?"

"True", he said. "How could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads? And of the objects which are being carried in like manner they would only see the shadows?"

"Yes", he said.

"And if they were able to converse with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them?"
"Very true."

"And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure to fancy when one of the passers-by spoke that the voice which they heard came from the passing shadow?"

"No question", he replied.

"To them", I said, "The truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images".

"That is certain."

"And now look again, and see what will naturally follow if the prisoners are released and disabused of their error. At first, when any of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk and look towards the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows; and then conceive someone saying to him, that what he saw before was an illusion, but that now, when he is approaching nearer to being and his eye is turned towards more real existence, he has a clearer vision, -- what will be his reply? And you may further imagine that his instructor is pointing to the objects as they pass and requiring him to name them, -- will he not be perplexed? Will he not fancy that the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects which are now shown to him?"

"Far truer."

"And if he is compelled to look straight at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes which will make him turn away to take and take in the objects of vision which he can see, and which he will conceive to be in reality clearer than the things which are now being shown to him?"

"True", he said.

"And suppose once more, that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast until he's forced into the presence of the sun himself, is he not likely to be pained and irritated? When he approaches the light his eyes will be dazzled, and he will not be able to see anything at all of what are now called 'realities'."

"Not all in a moment", he said.

"He will require to grow accustomed to the sight of the upper world. And first he will see the shadows best, next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; then he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars and the spangled heaven. And he will see the sky and the stars by night better than the sun or the light of the sun by day?"

"Certainly".

"Last of he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him in his own proper place, and not in another, and he will contemplate him as he is".

"Certainly".

"He will then proceed to argue that this is he who gives the season and the years, and is the guardian of all that is in the visible world, and in a certain way the cause of all things which he and his fellows have been accustomed to behold?"
"Clearly", he said, "he would first see the sun and then reason about him".
"And when he remembered his old habitation, and the wisdom of the den and his fellow-prisoners, do you not suppose that he would felicitate himself on the change, and pity them?"
"Certainly, he would".
"And if they were in the habit of conferring honors among themselves on those who were quickest to observe the passing shadows and to remark which of them went before, and which followed after, and which were together; and who were therefore best able to draw conclusions as to the future, do you think that he would care for such honors and glories, or envy the possessors of them? Would he not say with Homer:"
"Better to be the poor servant of a poor master, and to endure anything, rather than think as they do and live after their manner?"
"Yes", he said, "I think that he would rather suffer anything than entertain these false notions and live in this miserable manner".
"Imagine once more", I said, "such an one coming suddenly out of the sun to be replaced in his old situation; would he not be certain to have his eyes full of darkness?"
"To be sure", he said.
"And if there were a contest, and he had to compete in measuring the shadows with the prisoners who had never moved out of the den, while his sight was still weak, and before his eyes had become steady (and the time which would be needed to acquire this new habit of sight might be very considerable) would he not be ridiculous? Men would say of him that up he went and down he came without his eyes; and that it was better not even to think of ascending; and if any one tried to loose another and lead him up to the light, let them only catch the offender, and they would put him to death ".
"No question", he said.

Plato, Republic VII (508b-513c), trans. Benjamin Jowett

As mentioned in the abstract, this allegory can be found in many literary works; it is especially prevalent in dystopian stories and films such as 1984 by George Orwell and The Matrix by Andy and Larry Wachowski. In both The Matrix and in 1984 the protagonist exists as a disgruntled member of a society living in an illusion forced upon it by the ruling class, Big Brother and the Party in 1984 and the machines in The Matrix. In 1984, the protagonist, Winston works for the Ministry of Truth “correcting” historical inaccuracies. At some point he finds an ancient newspaper clipping that proved the innocence of three men who have since been convicted by the Party and have never
been seen again. At that point he realizes without doubt that the Party has and is lying to the citizens about everything. That moment is the same as the moment when the cave allegory mystic looks at the sun.

In *The Matrix*, that moment occurs when Neo, the protagonist is killed in the matrix (but not in reality) by Agent Smith. Fortunately, like in any good Hollywood movie, Trinity professes her love for him (in reality) and brings him back to life and he returns with a deeper understanding of the matrix than any human has ever had... and he can dodge bullets but doesn’t have to. He then of course goes on to save all of humanity in a very Jesus-like fashion from the machines; just as the mystic of the allegory returns to the cave to attempt to liberate his old friends in the cave.

Finding elements of the cave allegory in literature and film is easy because the mode of expression is the same: language. Art and music are fundamentally different from language because they use abstract techniques to convey emotion and meaning. Furthermore, any meaning conveyed by any art or music is only there by virtue of the audience’s aesthetic evaluation and interpretation of that of the creator of the music or art.

In Read Lockhart’s 2012 ARTPRIZE entry *The Allegory of the Cave*, which can be viewed at [http://www.artprize.org/read-lockhart/2012/the-allegory-of-the-cave](http://www.artprize.org/read-lockhart/2012/the-allegory-of-the-cave), Plato’s allegory is interpreted from the aesthetic of the prophet returning from the brightness to the cave to illuminate the understanding of the cave dwellers. It is the self-portrait of a painter in a cave painting on the wall. The only actual objects in the painting are Read Lockhart himself and his dog. Everything else is alluded to by shadows cast on the cave wall Lockhart uses as a canvas. There is a shadow of a bystander, representing
the audience, there is a shadow of a horse that Lockhart is coloring in to make it an image of a horse rather than only the shadow, and there is also the shadows of Lockhart and his dog. Also on the wall are various pictographs. Part of the horses’ shadow covers some of them up; we may deduce that Lockhart intends to paint over them.

The implication is that Lockhart is standing in front of the cave dwellers, showing them the limitations of their understanding. By filling in the shadow of the horse, he is exposing its true image as opposed to its projected image. The fact that he and his dog are objects that cast shadows of their own, exposes the nature of the shadows as products of light eclipsed by an object rather than being objects themselves.

The pictographs are interesting because they are paintings of objects in the same way that the horse is only a painting of an object; the actual horse is out of view. Only someone who has been out of the cave and seen the actual objects could have painted them. This implies that other prophets have returned to the cave and painted on the wall just as Lockhart is doing. But they painted only images; Lockhart is showing objects and is painting their image in the shadow they cast. The outcome will be the same, however the cave dwellers will remain in the dark cave and only a few will understand that the shadows on the wall are a puny part of reality. The important thing is that progress is made; previous prophets only painted images, while Lockhart exposes shadows as images of objects.

There are countless examples of Plato’s Allegory of the Cave in literature and film. There are very few works of art that get beyond the image of people in a cave. And there are even fewer, if any, musical works that deliberately expressive of the allegory. This is in part due to the fact that music is not a useful tool when it comes to expressing
things that are easy to talk about and express with words. Music is, of course, among the most effective means of gaining access to more nebulous topics, emotions for example. However, since those subjects are difficult to discuss with conventional methods, no one can agree on exactly what any music expresses. In the next chapter, we will explore some of the ideas that various musician philosophers have proposed concerning the expressive capacity of music.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The overarching theme of the Allegory of the Cave is progress towards higher wisdom. It is the story of a character on a journey of knowledge. In the beginning, he has a very limited aesthetic; he understands only the shadows on the wall. He does not understand that shadows are silent and that the sounds he hears are coming from the things that are producing the shadows. If he weren’t in chains, his situation would be laughable; he is like a child thinking he knows everything but soon to realize his ignorance and naivety.

When he does have a realization moment, he is pained. Being accustomed to the darkness, the bright light of the fire smarts his eyes so much so that he must immediately look away. As he turns from the light, he is then able to see objects for what they truly are and the shadows for what they truly are. This realization moment is repeated as he is removed from the cave and set into the sunlight. Again, the light is too brilliant for him, he must turn from the sun to see and understand the objects it illuminates. Through repeated efforts, he is finally able to glimpse the sun, the brightest of all objects. He is then able to understand himself in relation to everything else.

Once he understands everything, he remembers his comrades in the cave and resolves to go back to the cave and illuminate their consciousness. It is a mistake; he is unable to distinguish the shadows because from his perspective, everything in there is a
dark shadow. He is unable to participate in the cave dwellers’ activities because he is blind. He is unable to convince them of value of the sun and the outside world. They mock him, they shun him, and they execute him.

The emotional progression of such a character would be chaotic. It would take time to explain and even then it would not be fully understood without experience. This is why music is a good medium for attempting to explain something as specific as a mystic’s emotional journey.

Regarding music’s capacity to express and emote, Plato himself asserted that different modes be used responsibly because of the emotive power contained in them. According to Plato, for example, a warrior must not listen to the more relaxing modes like Ionian or Lydian, but rather should listen to the more heroic sounding modes such as Dorian or Phrygian. (Buchanan 1967, 364) The practicality of this idea is obvious. A country's warriors must always be ready to fight and be confident of victory. An up-tempo Phrygian march would fit the bill. The warrior aesthetic would easily understand the music and agree with its emotional content. On the other hand, if a country’s war music was composed in a very light style with a very bright Lydian mode, warriors would go to battle with a smile; they would die pitifully.

Plato’s contemporary, Aristotle agreed with him on this regard, that due to its emotive power, music must be handled with caution. In chapter five of Politics, Aristotle explains how music can convey emotion. He describes music as an action of human beings. A human action is a reflection of a human thought or emotion. Therefore, music can be a tool to temper the emotions of human beings. “From what has been said it is evident what an influence music has over the disposition of the mind, and how variously
it can fascinate it: and if it can do this, most certainly it is what youth ought to be instructed in”. (Ellis 2006, 176)

Schopenhauer took the Platonic approach, believing that all observable forms are reflections of what he called the Will, which can be thought of as the underlying plan of unity that influences our actions and aesthetics. Art (in the form of sculptures and paintings etc.) is therefore a secondary reflection of the Will because it is a human interpretation of objects whose forms are determined by the Will. He refers to art as a copy of the ideas, whereas he describes music as the language of the will. “Everywhere music expresses only the quintessence of life and its events, never these themselves, and therefore, their differences do not influence it”. (Stoor 1992, 142)

Richard Wagner agrees: “what music expresses, is eternal, infinite and ideal; it does not express the passion, love, or longing” of specific things or events, meaning that music does not express objects or even emotions, but rather the formula for understanding objects and emotions. (Stoor 1992, 145) For Wagner, music expresses the types of ineffable things that all humans at all times can understand. They may be considered universal truths and their meanings transcend aesthetics. Because music is able to operate in such a transcendental way, we can use it as a tool to better express and understand emotions. Wagner is the archetypal image of the musician who repeats the cliché that he is merely a vessel and the music just comes out through him…

Wagner is also famous for his use of leitmotif; a musical phrase that is assigned a meaning associated with a person, place, thing or idea etc. Leitmotifs are dependent however on the composer assigning them meanings. If the composer does not designate meanings to his music there is no possible way for the audience to discern with
certainty the meaning of the music. I certainly agree with Wagner that music can be used as a tool to express emotions and my music has a very definite meaning… to me, but if I don’t explain it to listeners, they are free to assign (or not assign) their own meanings to my music.

Modern composer Karlheinz Stockhausen agrees with Wagner, but uses more mature and humble language. “That each person should gradually become conscious enough to choose specific music and be able to say: ‘I choose that within myself which comes to vibration through this music.’” (Godwin 1987, 289) I’ll admit to extreme jealousy when I first read those words; I wish they were mine. Music communicates effectively when and only when the all parties involved (the composer, the performers and the audience) are ready for it to communicate. There will be no effective and complete communication via music unless those parties are all of the same aesthetical mind set. Since no two individuals are the same, effective and complete communication via music is impossible.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Here follows an explanation of my music:

The first section (measures 1-67) is a prelude, and was composed last by re-arranging musical ideas from the rest of the piece. The purpose of this section is to provide a brief musical summary of the whole piece with all the emotional undertones implied. It is divided into two parts; the first is dreamlike and tranquil while the second is harsh and abrasive. The juxtaposition of these two parts illustrates that waking is often painful. There are three main musical ideas introduced in the prelude that are important throughout the rest of the piece. They are: major and minor seconds, opposing rhythmic gestures, and staggered entrances of melodic gestures.

Major and minor seconds are intervals that create a very dissonant yet beautiful shimmering effect when they are used in a high register. Throughout this piece they are used to symbolize light, be it fire light or sunlight, which is used by Plato as a metaphor for enlightenment. They are introduced in measure one in the vibraphone. Since they are in a high register, their dissonance does not disturb the rest of the harmony which is very simple (A flat Lydian). In this section they sit in the sonic background of the music like a small, pleasant idea that continues to occur in the back of your mind.
Opposing rhythms, throughout the piece, represent conflicting ideas. For the storyline this is when the hero learns something new that contradicts his previous knowledge. They first occur in measure ten as the half note triplets moving in contrast to the original quarter/half note melody.

Staggered entrances of melodic gestures are always symbolic of a concept that seems to be just beyond our grasp, like little hints of an idea that appear suddenly, fade away and appear suddenly somewhere else in the field so that you can never get the whole of it. They first appear in the upper winds and mallet percussion at measure one as the quarter/half note motif that is repeated in different voices (oboe and flute for example) but displaced by a beat.

The first part of the prelude is modal because as Plato suggests, modes can emote. I chose the Lydian mode because of its bright warm sound. For me, it is a relaxing mode. The droning pedal tone would be overly static if it were not for the quarter note harmonic rhythm in the upper parts outlining the Lydian mode with cascading melodies. These melodies are developed to measure 28 when the A flat Lydian mode is defined by the multitude of A flats and E flats throughout the ensemble. Major seconds occur here of course in the upper mallets, A flat and B flat.

The second part of the prelude (m. 29-67) is not Lydian, not bright and warm, not modal and not relaxing. It is loud, abrasive and noisy. If the first part is dreamlike, this part is the nightmare that wakes you up. Melodies of the later parts of the music are twisted and altered to be unrecognizable and orchestrated into non-pitched percussion instruments. As it develops, more parts are introduced and consequently opposing rhythms become more frequent and stressful. At the end (m. 64), half note rhythms
entering at alternating beats are opposed against dotted quarter note patterns also entering on alternating beats and these rhythms are juxtaposed against the triplet rhythms. To further confuse the nightmare there is an accelerating rhythmic ostinato in the piano, marimba timpani and euphonium. It is the end of the nightmare and it’s a relief when the next section begins.

The second section (m. 68-168) is a simple waltz. It is intended to represent a childlike naivety and ignorance. Symbolically it represents the hero at the moment he becomes aware of the fire behind him. His reality is disturbed and he it trying to make sense out of it. Musically this is expressed by the very high pedal tones arranged as seconds mostly in the mallet percussion similar as in the prelude but more so. His disturbance is also alluded to by the always-increasing tempo that begins with a quarter note being worth 120 beats per minute but accelerates gradually to approximately 170 beats per minute at measure 150.

It opens with a chorale (m. 68-82), alluding to the first part of the prelude with alternating entrances of like melodies. The actual waltz begins at 83 with seconds appearing in the flutes and mallets and all other instruments establishing the waltz rhythm. The melody enters first with the oboe and the cello at 91; the cello has the melody throughout the entire song but wind instruments trade off. At measure 97, major second pedal tones appear in the vibraphone on the downbeat of each measure. At 103 the marimba and xylophone enter with major second pedal tones but on alternating beats to reiterate the staggering entrances of motifs from the prelude.

From the aesthetic perspective of the hero, this amounts to an experience that causes him to wonder at his situation. At certain points (m. 101-2, 109,118, 128, 147-8,
154 and 155), off-beat accents mark the jarring effect of suddenly being aware of something previously unknown. Sometimes those moments can be wonderful, but at these moments, it is not; these are the moments when the hero is becoming aware of his situation of being chained in a cave. After each group of accents, the music accelerates to make the waltz more tense and the high major second pedal tones become louder, creating both harmonic and dynamic tension.

At 103 an alternative melody is presented. It is the rhythmic motif of the opening melody of the prelude, symbolizing that the hero is attempting to flush out these ideas presented to him in his dream. At first it is pleasant, as it was in the dream, but it soon becomes dissonant at measure 111 when many of the major second pedal tones transpose up a major second. The waltz at this point becomes morbid.

A reprieve from the pedal tones is granted at measure 130 but only for four bars. This is like a very brief moment of clarity for the hero, but it is quickly destroyed at measure 134 when the pedal tones and the non-pitched percussion return with even more driving energy. The waltz feel is finally broken at measure 149 with a new time signature, 2/4; but only for one measure. The 3/4 time signature returns and so does the waltz but the waltz feel diminishes rapidly as longer tones take on more of the focus. There is still the quarter note melody but now it is slowing down and always ascending, symbolizing the hero ascending out of the cave and into the brightness of the sun which pains him, symbolized by the altered extended chord at measure 165-8. It is a simple A natural triad with both a natural and a sharped 9th, B and B sharp (and the enharmonic equivalents). As a result the “majorness” of the chord is disturbed by minor seconds (B,
C, being the 9ths and C sharp/D flat being the 3rd of the chord) in the upper range symbolizing the painful light of the sun.

The third section of this music (m. 169-218) is to illustrate the hero’s emotional journey once he has exited the cave. He is in a completely new environment, he is temporarily blinded by the brightness of the sun and he is totally alone. In this section the seconds become much less prevalent in favor of the rhythmic opposition. At 183 the low woodwinds play triplets against the quarter note rhythms of the flutes. The rhythmic opposition continues to measure 188 and at 189 the rhythmic voices coincide as the brass enters; here all voices play triplets. The instrumental color changes at this point too as the brass takes the highlight through to measure 200.

At measure 198 the upper woodwinds enter again with seconds entering on different beats yet they are not melodically static like they were during the waltz. At this presentation of the seconds, they move melodically with long tones that overlap each other creating harmonic tension. It is at first overbearing but the long tone melodies quickly give way to the previous triplet-based melody which then incorporates the seconds into themselves as the progression decreases in volume to an almost inaudible level at measure 214.

The dynamic of measure 214 is juxtaposed against the extremely loud volume of measure 215 when all instruments play extended altered chords fortissimo. This is another one of those jarring moments of realization, but unlike in the waltz, this is intended to be wonderful. This is the moment when the hero is able to look at the sun and understand everything.
The forth section of this music (m. 219-281) should be understood as an expansion of the moment of enlightenment. The compositional technique here is phasing; a melody is introduced and repeated in a different voice but displaced rhythmically. In this case, the melody is the sixteenth note pattern eventually stated at measure 234 in the piano. The melody is developed using methods that don’t alter either the rhythm or the pitches of the melody. Thereby different parts of the melody will be brought out at different times in an unpredictable way. Notes occurring on strong beats will naturally be slightly accentuated compared to other notes. Instrumental color will also bring out certain notes and mask others. As a result, the overall shape of the melody will be unpredictable.

At measure 281 there is a sudden and unexpected pause with a fermata on beat two. The only sounds are the tail end of a gong hit and a bass drum hit on beat two. The experience of enlightenment has ended abruptly. Just like those little melodic motifs of the prelude, the enlightenment melody just vanished all together.

The fifth section (m. 282-321) covers the part of the allegory of the cave where the hero resolves to go back to the cave and tell the others about the sun. Logically, it is therefore composed using parts of the third and forth sections. All the sixteenth note melodies are derived from the phase music section and the harmonic content is from section three.

At first it is heavy and hard because the hero is coming down from his enlightened state, perhaps he became hungry and realized he must still cope with his immediate needs. But shortly the harshness wears off and the enlightened melody is alone (m. 295) in the flute. Then it is very exposed soloistic type of music as more of the
enlightened phase music is reintroduced and gradually re-takes the prominent role at measure 314. From here increasing tempo and dynamics into the next section with a big held whole note chord at measure 322 creates tension.

The final section represents the hero’s return to the cave. His descent down into the cave is illustrated by the descending half note melody at measure 323. Although it is the same cave it seems very different. Instead of a simple waltz, the final section uses alternating time signatures of 4/4 and 7/8. The seconds are still present but the harmony is very dark and static. There is a dotted quarter note melody that enters at measure 332 in the bass clarinet and the cello. Unlike in the waltz however, the cello soon succumbs to the open fifths (B and F sharp) in the bass voices. The bass clarinet does likewise. Slowly more instruments are added to the mix, the low voices play the open fifths and the upper voices outline the B Dorian mode also with dotted quarters. These melodies are crude at best, they simply move up and down the mode and as more and more are introduced the texture becomes very thick yet without any real direction. It is intended to illustrate the narrow minded aesthetic of the cave. What was originally thought to be beautiful and comfortable has now been revealed as a dark prison.

An actual melody occurs at measure 347 in the oboe. This melody was composed of the sixteenth note melody of the phase music from earlier, and it represents the hero’s attempt to explain to the cave dwellers of the wonders outside the cave. His efforts are of course useless and the dotted quarter note patterns return, first in the percussion in measure 348. The hero’s melody is expanded into the other upper woodwinds and finishes at measure 358 with the same 32\textsuperscript{nd} note slur from the prelude.
The dotted quarter note cave motif develops in the piano but with chords, although the same open fifths and dotted quarter note rhythms is present in the bass. At measure 361 the vibraphone and upper woodwinds introduce a decidedly Lydian melody as in the prelude. This melody persists until the end of the piece but at measure 371, the hero has exited the cave again into the light and has resolved to live out his days outside the cave in the sunlight. As he walks away, the sounds of the cave dissolve into the background. Hence from measure 371 to measure 395, instruments gradually drop out of the mix until at the end there is nothing but mallet percussion playing the original motif from the prelude, although it is in unison rather than being rhythmically displaced.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Plato’s Allegory of the Cave has many meanings. I have chosen to focus on its basic plot structure as a means of explaining how an individual progresses in understanding. This same plot structure can be easily found in any fictional story, historical myth, or religious text etc. It is the hero’s journey and it permeates our culture. In literature and film it is often expressed metaphorically. The two examples I chose 1984, by George Orwell and The Matrix by the Wachowski brothers stand out clearly as hero stories.

These examples plainly illustrate the realization scene of the mystical hero of the cave allegory. In both cases the protagonist is exposed to a new knowledge that upsets his previous knowledge. This experience is harsh and painful just as it is for the mystic cave dweller when he sees the firelight or the sun.

In art, the basic storyline is difficult if not impossible to express accurately. Art is a still form (it has limited temporal capabilities) and as such is limited in its capacity to express progression. Nonetheless, progression can be implied as is evident by Read Lockhart’s painting The Allegory of the Cave. Progression is implied by the juxtaposition of the pictographs against Lockhart’s own image as a prophet painting a more complete image of reality.
Music is even less accurate in terms of expressing a storyline because music doesn’t produce any meaning that people can agree on. Musicians love to claim music as a universal language of emotions but the truth is that there is nothing universal about meanings in music except that we all experience *something* unique and personal when we listen to music.

For Plato, music has the potentially dangerous capacity to emote and therefore must be treated with extreme caution and responsibility. Each of the modes in ancient Greek society for example had an appropriate time and place and to diverge from that plan could be dangerous. Aristotle viewed music as a reflection of thoughts and emotions and therefore the quintessential essence of all reality (because all reality is ultimately defined by our thoughts regarding our experience).

As such, music is therefore the ultimate means of communicating emotion. Schopenhauer agrees with Aristotle and even goes a step further to assert that music is superior to art. For Schopenhauer this is obvious because music does not depend on understood forms as art does but rather, presents its own forms that are the essence of all else. According to Schopenhauer, music is the essence of all reality; it is the most suitable means for communicating emotions. Richard Wagner’s music does quite well expressing emotions via *leitmotif*, but to use *leitmotif* is admitting the limitations of music because it ties a musical phrase to a meaning through the use of a secondary means of expression like drama or language.

Concerning my own music, if ten ears listen, I am sure there will be five different interpretations of the music. The difficulty of communicating through aesthetics can never be totally overcome, but by the consistent honing of our craft, we can certainly
make progress. I am confident that if the listener endeavors to listen well to my music he will understand at least a kernel of my ideas; and that is enough.
References
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Appendix A