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THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF MUSIC IN THE ITALIAN FUTURIST PROGRAM

Abstract:

This paper investigates methods employed by the Italian Futurist movement in pursuing artistic regeneration within the sphere of music. During the early twentieth century, the institutions that governed Italian musical education, production and performance were steeped in tradition, principally concerned with commercial exploits, and unresponsive to change. This largely stale and regressive situation was adverse to Futurism's greater objectives of cultural and artistic renewal. In response, the movement destabilized hierarchical paradigms that dictated the ways in which music was learnt, composed, performed and witnessed. Numerous Futurist writings as well as alternative approaches to performance and composition indicate: the rejection of formal education in favour of autodidacticism and experimental learning; the use of alternative spaces for musical performance outside of the concert hall; and the disruption of traditionally implied authoritarian relationships between composer and performer, and in some cases, performer and audience. The result was a democratization of music within the Futurist context, where a preference for individuality and subjectivity over an adherence to institutional conventions collapsed traditional (and often elitist) parameters that dictated artistic identity, taste culture, and performance practice.

Keywords:

Futurism, Music, Musicology, History

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