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## **FRANZ LISZT MEPHISTO WALTZ NO. 1: PROGRAMMATIC EXPRESSION AND THE DYNAMICS OF PERFORMANCE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century marked the emergence of storytelling through music, later known as “programmatic music.” This style of narrative expression invites performers to engage their imagination to bring the music to life. For the performer, the interpretation of a piece is shaped by imaginative insight, which then guides its execution. Simultaneously, programmatic music provides listeners with a framework for forming expectations about the performance. In this context, it becomes crucial for the performer to decipher the composer’s intended narrative through musical elements and notational cues. This imaginative approach to interpretation serves as a foundation for contemporary performance practices.

Franz Liszt’s Mephisto Waltz No. 1, a quintessential example of 19th-century programmatic music, holds a prominent place in piano literature. Its narrative, outlined by the composer in accompanying program notes, offers valuable interpretive guidance to performers.

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This study explores Mephisto Waltz No. 1 as a work that conveys a specific narrative through music, examining its impact on performance interpretation and the interplay between the written score and its realization in performance.

**Keywords:** Franz Liszt, Mephisto Waltz No. 1, performance, imagination, interpretation.

## **FRANZ LISZT MEPHISTO WALTZ NO 1: PROGRAMATİK İFADE VE YORUMCULUĞUN DİNAMİKLERİ**

### **ÖZ**

19. yüzyılda daha sık karşımıza çıkmaya başlayan ve bu dönemden sonra “programlı müzik” olarak tanımlanan, hikayeleri müzikle anlatma biçimi; yorumcuyu hayal gücünü kullanmaya yönlendirmektedir. Bir yorumcu için yorumlanacak olan eserin müzikal fikri hayal gücü ile şekillenir ve bu temelde icra edilir. Aynı zamanda programlı müzik, dinleyicinin de icra edilen müzik üzerine beklenti oluşturmasına zemin hazırlar. Bu durumda, bestecinin nota aracılığıyla anlatmak istediklerini, kullanılan müzik terimleri ve işaretleriyle yorumcunun keşfetmesi gereklidir. Eseri icra etmek isteyen müzisyenin hayal gücü kullanarak şekillendirmesi gereken bu yaklaşım, günümüz yorumculuğunun temelini oluşturmaktadır.

19. Yüzyılın en bilinen bestecilerinden olan Franz Liszt’in Mephisto Vals No.1’i de yukarıda bahsedilen programlı müzik örneklerinden biridir. Hikayesinin besteci tarafından program notu ile belirtilmiş olması ve bunun yorumcuya yön vermesi açısından piyano edebiyatında önemli bir yere sahiptir.

Bu çalışmada, Franz Liszt’in Mephisto Vals No.1’i, belirli bir konuyu müzikle ifade etmesi, icra eden kişiyi bu doğrultuda yönlendirmesi nedeniyle ele alınmış ve nota-performans ilişkisi açısından incelenmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Franz Liszt, Mephisto Vals No.1, yorumculuk, hayal gücü, performans.

### **INTRODUCTION**

For a performer, dedicating long hours to understanding a composer through their written work and making sense of the music is perhaps as vital as the essence of human existence. An individual begins to make sense of their environment from the moment they open their eyes to the world; a

similar journey unfolds for a musician. From the first encounter with classical music—particularly during the long and rigorous educational process—an enduring intellectual pursuit takes shape, focusing on the search for meaning within the music. This reflective process, which becomes an instinctive practice with each new piece, persists throughout the performer’s professional career. Most human behaviors are conveyed through signs, sounds, symbols, and representations that hold meaningful significance (Haviland, Prins, Walrath and McBride, 2008: 115). Similarly, the written language of music—comprised of notes—functions as a system to interpret what is heard. Just like the written language (alphabet) we use to understand life, musical notes also serve as signs and symbols. Therefore, when these notes come together, they transform into a symbolic language for the performer. Cohen describes the symbolic nature of music as “objects, movements, concepts, or linguistic formations that ambiguously replace a multitude of different meanings, evoke emotions and sentiments, and compel individuals to act” (Erol, 2002: 171). This ability of music to evoke emotions and sentiments begins with written notes, initiating the journey of meaning. Thus, the performer’s first step in interpreting a piece lies in understanding the notes before bringing them to life through performance.

Throughout music history, many composers have adopted approaches that contribute to the quest for meaning. The titles given to their works, as well as those attributed by listeners, serve as examples of this effort. Such practices, evident even in the Baroque period, guide both listeners and performers in their pursuit of meaning. The 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly the Romantic period, further exemplified this; as a result, it is known as “the age of programmatic music.” Particularly during this period and afterward, this art form was held in extremely high esteem for at least a century, with its success being significantly contributed by master artists (Wellek, 1962: 149).

This study focuses on Franz Liszt’s Mephisto Waltz No. 1, a piece accompanied by the composer’s own program notes. The analysis explores how the work should be shaped through the performer’s imagination and how the narrative envisioned by Liszt is conveyed through music.

### **Purpose and Significance**

This study seeks to provide guidance for musicians wishing to interpret Mephisto Waltz No. 1, S.514, one of the most renowned works in piano literature, by offering suggestions on how it can be approached within the framework of programmatic music.

In piano performance, the creation of meaning is deeply rooted in imagination. For the performer, analyzing both the technical and musical aspects of a piece with a defined narrative is crucial. Therefore, the first step in the interpretive process is for the performer to identify and draw inspiration from the score before embarking on the actual performance.

### **Problem Statement**

Performance is an art shaped by intellectual processes, such as imagination, alongside musical knowledge and technical skill. Mephisto Waltz No. 1, S.514, holds a prominent place in piano literature and must be approached through the lens of imagination. While providing musical inspiration for the piece can be seen as an advantage for the composer, it is not sufficient for a complete interpretation. The composer does not explicitly indicate which themes correspond to the narrative's musical expression, leaving the task of interpretation to the performer's imagination. This study aims to contribute to the interpretive process by exploring how these narrative-driven themes can be shaped and brought to life through imagination.

### **Programmatic Music**

A genre that became more popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, programmatic music is designed to evoke a specific story, natural scene, historical event, or literary work in the listener's mind. In this genre, the composer shapes the music not only through melodic and harmonic elements but also to convey an external event, situation, or emotion. Programmatic music typically relies on an external program, meaning there is specific content that the composer intends to express through the music. However, examples of this genre can also be found in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Notable examples include L.V. Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*, A. Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, H. Berlioz's *Symphony Fantastique* and G.F. Handel's *Water Music*, which can all be classified within this tradition. In its simplest definition, programmatic music—unlike “absolute music,” which is not based on any external content—is instrumental music that has a subject or title depicting nature, social events, emotional states, literary works, visual and plastic art, characters, the lives or personalities of individuals, or a specific scene or theme (Çalgan, 2017: 653). In other words, such works may sometimes directly narrate a story, while at other times they abstractly describe an emotion or scene. For example, a piece of music depicting a walk through the forest might imitate bird chirps, the rustling of leaves, or the sound of the wind. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Franz Liszt emerged as a key composer who contributed significantly to the programmatic music genre. Liszt, who

coined the terms “program music” and “symphonic poem,” defined the program as a preface added to an instrumental piece. His explanation highlights his intention to focus attention on poetic ideas within the work, serving as a safeguard against potential misinterpretations by the listener (Karadeniz, 2020: 25). Furthermore, Liszt established a strong connection between storytelling and emotional expression, helping to clarify the boundaries of the genre (Karadeniz, 2020: 25). As a result, not only text-based music but also any instrumental works that create a particular atmosphere, feature a title, or convey a specific theme could be classified as programmatic music. In this context, Liszt’s Mephisto Waltz No. 1 embodies this definition, with its program note acting as a preface to the piece’s content.

### **Mephisto Waltz No. 1 S 514 “Der Tanz in der Dorfschenke” (Dance in the Village Inn)**

The first feature that assessed Liszt in the glorious height of European culture was his pianistic virtuosity (Balan, 2015: 4). He was one of the most influential composers and pianists of the 19th century. His exceptional virtuosity, which brought the piano technique to its pinnacle during that time, not only captivated contemporary audiences but also earned him widespread fame. Through his compositions, some of the most demanding in piano literature of the era, Liszt cemented his legacy, ensuring that his name would echo through the ages.

In this article, Liszt’s Mephisto Waltz No. 1 will be examined, one of his most popular piano pieces, which he composed after his days as a touring performer had passed. The argument is that this piece mediates the experience of virtuosity in three distinct ways. First, it represents this encounter programmatically: Liszt’s composition is based on a poetic quotation that evokes the mastery and skill of a virtuoso performer. Second, this representation recalls similar instances where Liszt’s work has captivated listeners. Third, in depicting and recalling these virtuosic moments, the piece recreates them. This final point is evident to anyone who has witnessed a proficient performance of the waltz: as a true display of pianistic virtuosity, the piece is poised to elicit enthusiastic applause from the audience (Larkin, 2015: 195).

The Mephisto Waltzes consist of four pieces composed by Liszt between 1859 and 1885. Numbers 1 and 2 were originally composed for orchestra and later transcribed for piano, Numbers 3 and 4 were written exclusively for piano. The first of these is the most popular and is frequently performed and recorded in concert. As a notated composition, the first Mephisto Waltz was

conceived as part of the legacy on which Liszt's posthumous fame would rest. However, the piece also functions as a metaphorical record of his own memories and experiences (Larkin, 2015: 216). At first glance, Mephisto Waltz No. 1 is often perceived as the waltz of Mephisto, the devil's dance music, with all its associations with darkness (Larkin, 2015: 206). However, this interpretation does not fully capture the essence of the piece. In fact, the musical approach reflects a multifaceted portrayal of the Mephisto character. Mephisto is not simply a villain; he is also a fascinating and alluring figure. Thus, the waltz rhythm, with its seemingly cheerful and elegant surface, conceals a hidden malevolence beneath. Liszt skillfully employs this irony and contradiction in the musical narrative. Mephisto's diabolical allure can also be seen as a reference to the darker, desire-driven aspects of human nature. Liszt's work, therefore, is not just a technical achievement but also carries a profound philosophical meaning.

The theme of the piece aligns with Liszt's Romantic ideals, focusing on humanity's dark inner desires and the seductive power of demonic influences. Musically, Mephisto's use of the "waltz" rhythm serves as a deceptive mask; while the waltz is typically known as a graceful and lyrical dance, here, the basic rhythm and melodic structure symbolize a trap or inevitable downfall.

Mephisto Waltz No. 1 is a prime example of program music, incorporating a passage from Nikolaus Lenau's 1836 poetic drama *Faust*. The program note Liszt drew from Lenau is included in the musical score;

"There is a wedding feast in progress in the village inn, with music, dancing, carousing. Mephistopheles and Faust pass by, and Mephistopheles induces Faust to enter and take part in the festivities. Mephistopheles snatches the fiddle from the hands of a lethargic fiddler and draws from it indescribably seductive and intoxicating strains. The amorous Faust whirls about with a full-blooded village beauty in a wild dance; they waltz in mad abandon out of the room, into the open, away into the woods. The sounds of the fiddle grow softer and softer, and the nightingale warbles his love-laden song" (Ewen, 1965: 520).

Based on this program note, it can be understood the story that the music conveys. However, this known narrative, or the printed portion of the note, represents only half of the piece. The sections following the nightingale sounds mentioned in the program are not included in the printed score. At this point, the continuation of the piece is thematically interpreted from my perspective as a performer.

## Introduction Motif

The fast, threatening musical themes at the beginning of the piece symbolize the emergence of Mephisto. The rapid passages and dramatic chords in this section musically suggest the presence of the devil and deceptive elements. The fast tempos, rhythmic turbulence, and dynamic changes emphasize the diabolical character of the piece. When the introduction motif is examined in the context of the story, it represents the moment when Mephistopheles picks up the violin and begins to play. The magnificent opening, built upon perfect fifths stacked on top of each other, symbolizes the Devil tuning his violin (Larkin, 2015: 206). To narrate this moment and transfer the violin playing to the piano, the composer uses the notes of the violin strings—G, D, A, and E—altered in a way that fits the piano. The chord clusters, beginning with a single note and expanding to five notes, represent the violin strings. However, these notes are not in the order of the violin strings. The chord clusters contain these notes in a different playing sequence: the first note is E, followed by the others in a rearranged order to form the chords (Sauer, 1913: 2).

**Allegro vivace (quasi presto)**

5. *mf*

*f marcato*

*p*

1

Score 1: Introduction motif, representation of five-note chords.

From this point, the use of the violin string notes on the piano, and their being heard in a manner reminiscent of violin playing (with occasional broken chords), suggests that the musical representation of the story begins at this moment.

### **Beginning Motif of Waltz**

The waltz form in this piece creates a kind of irony, following the dark and threatening atmosphere of the introduction. The waltz is traditionally seen as a graceful and joyful dance, but here, Liszt uses it as a deceptive trap. While the waltz theme is typically cheerful, in this context it gives the listener a sense of impending danger or deceit throughout the piece.

This motif is connected to the introduction by a brief arpeggio. At the end of this arpeggio, the waltz theme emerges as the main motif. The accompanying chords, played with the left hand, can be interpreted as representing Mephisto's wild dance within the story. This is due to the continuous nature of the chords, which need to be played in a fast tempo. The continuity of these chords represents the madness of the dance, while the theme played with the right hand represents the existence of the dance. As the piece progresses, these two motifs are replaced with new themes, shifting the flow of the waltz. Even though the flow changes, the chord clusters in the left hand, which were heard when the waltz first appeared, maintain their character. In other words, these chords form the waltz character throughout the entire piece.



The image displays a musical score for a waltz, consisting of three systems of piano notation. The first system features a treble clef staff with a melodic line marked 'molto' and 'marcato', and a bass clef staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system shows a bass clef staff with a melodic line marked 'sopra' and a red double-headed arrow indicating a range. The third system includes a bass clef staff with a melodic line marked 'rinforz.'. The score is in 3/4 time and D major.

Score 2: Beginning of the waltz, waltz character in the left hand part.

### Motif of Love in the Forest

This motif forms the central theme of the slow section of the piece, followed by a return to the faster sections. In this part of the composition, the composer provides expressive performance directions, offering the performer guidance on how to interpret the music. For example, the theme is marked to be played “with a feeling of love / sincerely,” which allows for a more abstract and personalized interpretation of love.

The portrayal of love in this motif is reflected in the fact that the theme is played on the weak beats. Specifically, the main theme in the right hand begins on the third beat of each measure, and the meaning of the music deepens through the repetition of this theme on the same weak beat in the subsequent measures. Additionally, the left hand emphasizes the downbeat of each measure, the primary pulse of the music, which enhances the perception of the right-hand melody occurring on the weaker beats. As a result, the music takes on a more bittersweet tone, making it sound inviting and eager within the concept of love.

Score 3: Love motif, Strong/Weak beat representation.

### Nightingale Sounds

The nightingale sounds begin with a delicate octave and then move toward the middle octave, forming a motif that combines tremolos and trills. This motif, played on weak beats immediately following the love motif, symbolizes love as expressed through the song of nightingales.

Score 4: Nightingale sounds.

The motif is constructed with a maximum of three notes, created by combining both hands. The first measure of the motif is played legato, followed by three measures played staccato. It appears three times in total: once at the end of the previous section and then twice more before the “Faust’s Farewell” section, which will be analyzed later. The musical expression of this motif mimics the

sound of bird songs, and as such, it is considered a musical representation or depiction of nightingale sounds. However, the composer does not provide any specific explanation in the score regarding what this motif represents.

### **Return from the Forest to the Inn**

From this point onward, the text provided by the composer in the score is completed. Therefore, the sections from here to the end of the piece are shaped by both the story and the structure of the music. After the love section in the forest, represented by the nightingales, the dance gradually resumes. The intro to this section begins with a return of the main theme.



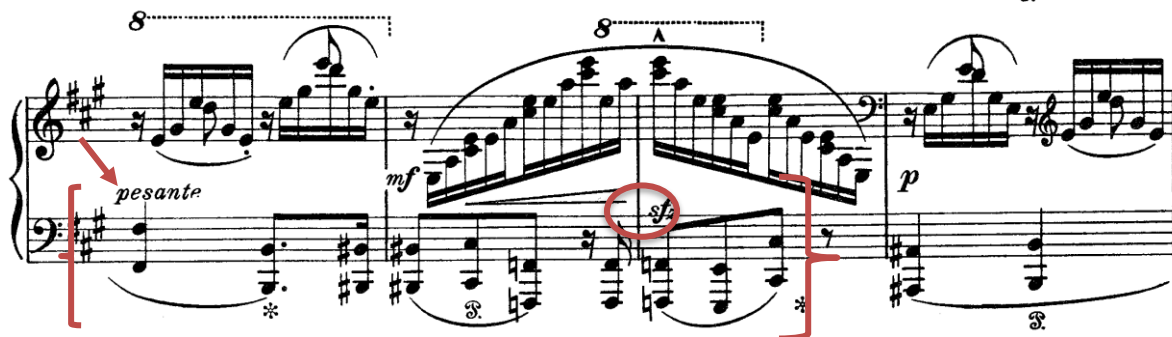
*Score 5: Return of the Main Theme.*

This section, with its subtle intro, evokes a gradual and quiet return from the forest to the inn. To fully appreciate the musical structure, it is essential to listen from the perspective of the observers witnessing Faust and the Peasant Girl, rather than that of the characters themselves. In other words, the music is crafted by those watching the characters, not by the characters themselves. This results in a quiet beginning, which is followed by a rising dance motif. The description of the entrance to the inn is depicted through a crescendo and the use of arpeggios as motifs.



Score 6: Entrance to the Inn – Arpeggios.

After this intro, the love themes become more assertive and determined, setting the stage for the return of the waltz. This shift takes place as the themes, written in the left hand and played in the bass registers, accompany the sharp arpeggios in the right hand.



Score 7: Varied Character of the Love Themes.

At this point, the melodic structure, now more intense and somewhat aggressive, is a transformed version of the theme that was initially marked as “played with a feeling of love / sincerely.”

### Rebirth and Transformation of the Waltz

This section signals the return of the love themes from the forest, now presented in a wilder and faster manner. The themes introduced earlier, when the dance first began, reappear here with increased technical complexity. This section, which can be seen as a recapitulation, intensifies the waltz by incorporating the slow movement themes, transforming it both technically and musically

as it becomes more technically demanding. This transformation mirrors the physical and emotional developments in the story. For example, when Faust attempts to seduce the Peasant Girl through dance, the waltz now feels distinctly different from its earlier iteration. At this point, the emotional changes influence the dance's physical progression, transforming it from the delicate and restrained movements at the start of the piece into something more passionate and assertive. It is because the Peasant Girl has not yet been seduced through dance. After the love in the jungle, experience has been added to the situation, transforming the music.

Score 8: Transformation of the Waltz – Chord Clusters and Octave Theme.

This transformation is depicted by the addition of more voices to the music, intensifying the excitement. The themes in this section remain naiver and lighter compared to the beginning of the waltz. While the music heard at this point is thematically the same or very similar to the initial rendition, the change in technical structure is quite evident. The sounds of the chord clusters in the left hand, which define the movement and character of the waltz, have been doubled, and the main theme in the right hand is now played in octaves. This change increases the intensity of the sound, making the music more exciting and making the technical structure of the piece even more challenging to interpret.

### Faust's Farewell

This section of the work revisits the theme of love portrayed in the forest but with a calmer and more static quality. From an interpretive standpoint, it contrasts with earlier sections, as it moves

away from the technical structures that previously depicted dance. The dance motif concludes here. In my view as a performer, this motif should be interpreted with an emotional state that blends the “breathless” feeling evoked by the dance’s madness with a sense of calm. A completely serene mood might leave the performance unprepared for the closing motif that follows. For an effective interpretation, while the motif can be calm, it should still carry a subtle sense of excitement or readiness for it.

From the perspective of the work’s narrative, this section, like the love motifs in the forest, also conveys a sense of invitation or desire through the music. This is particularly evident after the trills, where the repeating notes emphasize this mood. The inclusion of such a passage at the end of the dance may lead the interpreter to interpret it as Faust bidding farewell to the Peasant Girl.

The image shows a musical score for Franz Liszt's Mephisto Waltz No. 1. It consists of two systems of music. The first system shows the right hand with a trill and a triplet, and the left hand with a piano (p) dynamic. The second system shows the right hand with a trill and a triplet, and the left hand with a piano (p) dynamic and a bass line. The score includes markings for 'ad lib.', 'rit.', 'smorzando', and 'Presto.' There are also asterisks and circled numbers (3, 6, 3) indicating specific musical features.

Score 9: Faust’s Farewell, the depiction of love motifs considered inviting and willing.

### Exit from the Inn

In this final motif, both the conclusion of the work and the waltz can be heard. The bass notes in the left hand are derived from themes inspired by the earlier slow section. When viewed as a whole, this part functions as a brief coda. From a narrative perspective, it represents Faust storming out of the ballroom, slamming the door one last time. This interpretation can be explained as follows: The dance

Score 10: Dance rising with bass sounds.

intensifies with arpeggios played frantically one final time, symbolizing a storm-like moment. The closing octaves depict the moment when the door is slammed, signaling Faust's departure.

Score 11: Closing octaves.

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach of document analysis (Karataş, 2015) to examine how the programmatic music of the analyzed work is represented and to explore its story or musical program through a literature review. Based on these findings, the work was analyzed,

and recommendations were made to performers on how to effectively convey its musical impact. The study and its findings aim to provide valuable insights into the performance of the work.

## **FINDINGS**

The study findings indicate that the use of imagination plays a crucial role in interpretation. Thematic analysis of the work, intended to be performed with programmatic expression, was also derived. As a result, the musical presentation shaped by the performer's imagination evolved into a more expressive narrative, transcending mere technical virtuosity.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

In this study, Mephisto Waltz No. 1 was examined as an example of programmatic music, focusing on how the relationship between the story and the notation is reflected in performance, influenced by the dynamics of interpretation. Programmatic music, which tells a story through music, compels the performer to use their imagination. In the case of Mephisto Waltz No. 1, the story is present as inspiration in both the printed scores and the composer's program note. However, while the program note captures the general mood of the work, it does not fully align thematically. From this point, and based on my own interpretive perspective, the first four motifs are explained through the story outlined in the composer's program note, which has been passed down to the present day. The remaining four motifs are interpreted with my personal suggestions on how this continuation of the story might be reflected in the music. Regardless of whether the story of a work is explicit, the performance always relates directly to the interpreter's world of meaning. When focusing solely on transferring notation into performance, the performer interprets the work based on their own inferences, allowing for greater freedom. However, in works with a clear story, where interpretation is expected to follow, the performer faces the challenge of unifying puzzle pieces. In this regard, the performer must integrate what is written in the story with what is seen in the notation based on their own world of meaning.

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## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Programlı müzik örneklerinden olan Franz Liszt'in Mephisto Vals No. 1 adlı eseri hikâye ve nota ilişkisinin performansa yansımaları açısından, yorumculuğun dinamikleri temel alınarak incelenmiştir. Hikayeleri müzikle anlatma biçimi olarak tanımlanabilecek programlı müzik, yorumcuyu hayal gücünü kullanmaya zorlamaktadır. Mephisto Vals No.1 örneği özelinde hikâye, bir esin kaynağı olarak basılı notalarda ve bestecinin program notunda yer almıştır. Ancak bu program notu eserin genel havasını anlatmakta fakat tematik olarak tamamına karşılık gelmemektedir. Bu noktadan hareketle ve kendi yorumcu bakış açım doğrultusunda, ele alınmış olan ilk 4 motif bestecinin program notu olarak günümüze ulaşan hikayesiyle, kalan 4 motif ise bu

hikâyenin devamının müzikte nasıl karşılık bulabileceğine yönelik kişisel yorum önerimle açıklanmıştır. Bir eserin hikayesi belli olsun olmasın ortaya konulmuş olan performans, her zaman yorumcunun anlam dünyasıyla doğrudan ilişkilidir. Yalnızca notayı performansa dökmek bağlamında düşünüldüğünde yorumcu eseri kendi çıkarımları doğrultusunda yorumlar ve göreceli olarak daha serbesttir. Ancak hikayesi belli olan ve bu doğrultuda yorumlanması beklenen eserler söz konusu olduğunda karşımıza adeta birleştirilmesi gereken yapboz parçaları çıkmaktadır. Bu noktada yorumcunun yapması gereken, kendi anlam dünyası doğrultusunda hikâyede yazılmış olanla notada görüneni birleştirmektir.

Bir yorumcu için, yorumlanan eser üzerinde uzun saatler çalışarak besteciye yazılmış eser üzerinden anlamaya çalışmak, eserin müziğini anlamlandırmaya çalışmak belki insanın varoluşu kadar önemlidir. Nasıl bir insanın yaşadığı çevreyi anlamlandırma çabası, hayata gözlerini açtığı ilk günden itibaren süregelen bir eylemse, bir müzik yorumcusu için de benzer bir eylem söz konusudur. Klasik müzikle tanışılan ilk andan itibaren bu anlam arayışının nasıl olması gerektiği üzerine bitmek bilmeyen bir düşünsel süreç başlar. Her eserde kendisini tekrar eden bir refleks olarak gösteren bu süreç, sanatçının meslek hayatı boyunca devam eder. Bu süreçte anlamlandırılmak istenilen şey müziğin nasıl duyulması gerektiğidir ve bu da müziğin dili olan notalardan başlar. Yaşadığımız hayatı anlamlandırmak için kullandığımız yazı dili gibi notalar da bir işaret ve simge niteliği taşır. Bu nedenle de notalar bir araya geldiğinde yorumcu için simgesel bir dil haline dönüşmektedir. Bu da yorumcunun eseri yorumlamaya başladığı ilk eylemin, çalmadan önce, notaları anlamlandırması anlamına gelmektedir.

Müzik tarihi boyunca birçok bestecinin, bu anlam arayışına katkı sağlayan yaklaşımları olmuştur. Bestecilerin genellikle eserlerine isim koymak gibi bir anlayışı yoktur ama nadiren de olsa bazı isim konulmuş eserler karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu eserler bu anlam anlayışına örnek teşkil etmektedir. Bunun dışında dinleyicilerin duyduğu müziği isimlendirme refleksi de görülmektedir. Bestecilerin eserlerine hayranları tarafından isimler yakıştırılmış ve bu isimler günümüze kadar ulaşmıştır. Frederic Chopin 'in etütlerine yakıştırılan isimler, L.v. Beethoven'in piyano sonatlarından bazılarına yakıştırılan isimler buna örnek olarak gösterilebilir. Bu da müzikteki anlam arayışının bir yansıması olarak değerlendirilebilir. Barok Dönem'den dahi örnekleri bulunan bu yaklaşım, dinleyiciyi ve yorumcuyu anlam arayışında belirli bir yöne doğru yönlendiren bir durumdur. 19.yüzyılda bunun örnekleri daha çok karşımıza çıkmaktadır ve müzikte *Romantik Dönem* olarak bildiğimiz bu dönemde *Programlı Müzik* olarak adlandırılmıştır. Programlı müzik,

dinleyicinin zihninde belirli bir hikâye, doğa manzarası, tarihi olay veya bir edebi eser canlandırmayı amaçlayan bir müzik türüdür. Bu müzik türünde, besteci müziği sadece melodik ve armonik unsurlarla değil, aynı zamanda dış dünyadaki bir olayı, durumu veya duyguyu anlatmak amacıyla biçimlendirir. En temel tanımıyla programlı müzik ya da program müziği, kendisi dışında somut bir içeriğe dayandırılmayan ‘salt müziğin’ aksine doğanın, toplumsal olayların, duygu durumlarının, edebi eserlerin, görsel ve plastik sanat eserlerinin, hikâye karakterlerinin, kişilerin yaşam ve/veya karakterlerinin, bir sahne ya da konunun müzikle betimlendiği, konusu ve başlığı olan çalgısal müziktir. Özellikle bu dönemde ve sonrasında bu sanat türü en az bir yüzyıl boyunca son derece yüksek bir saygı görmüş ve başarısına büyük ve hatta çok büyük ustalar katkıda bulunmuştur. Bu ustalardan birisi de Franz Liszt’tir. Piyano tekniğini dönemin en üst düzeyine çıkarması, eserlerinde kullandığı orkestra yazısını o döneme kadar yapılmamış yeniliklerle donatması onun ustalığının bir göstergesidir. Bu makalede incelenen eser Mephisto Waltz No. 1 de aslında ilk olarak orkestra için tasarlanmış daha sonra bestelenen serinin bir parçası olarak piyano için bestelenmiştir. Eserin virtüözitesi, Liszt’in sahne icrası günleri geride kaldıktan sonra yazılmasına rağmen, bestecinin gençlik yıllarına atıfta bulunur niteliktedir. Eserin teması, Liszt’in romantik ideallerine uygun olarak, insanın karanlık içsel arzuları ve şeytani etkilerin büyüleyici gücü üzerine kurulur. Müzikal olarak, Mephisto'nun "vals" ritmini kullanması, aslında bir nevi aldatici bir maskedir; çünkü vals genellikle zarif ve lirik bir dans olarak bilirse de burada, dansın temel ritmi ve melodik yapısı, bir tuzak gibi, kötü bir kaderi simgeler. Eser, Nicolaus Lenau’nun *Faust* adlı eserinden bir bölüm üzerine bestelenmiş ve teknik seviyesi açısından piyanistlik virtüözitenin gerçek bir güç gösterisidir. Liszt, özellikle eserin esin kaynağının dinleyici tarafından anlaşılabilmesi için bir program notu paylaşmış ve müziğin nasıl algılanması gerektiği üzerine dinleyiciyi yönlendirmek istemiştir. Ancak bu program notunun, detaylı bir analizin sonucunda tarafımdan değerlendirilerek eserin tamamına denk gelmediği ve hatta yarısını karşıladığı tespit edilmiştir. Bu noktadan yola çıkarak bu çalışmada, Liszt’in program notunu paylaştığı Mephisto Waltz No.1 adlı eserin, hikayesi doğrultusunda anlamlandırılan temalarının hayal gücü kullanılarak ne olması gerektiği ve bestecinin isteği doğrultusunda yazılmış bir hikâyenin müzikle nasıl ifade edilmesi gerektiği analiz edilerek açıklanmaya çalışılmıştır. Eseri çalmak isteyen yorumculara öneri niteliği taşıyan bu analizlerin sonucunda ise, hayal gücü kullanımının yorumlamaya etkisi gibi önemli çıkarımlar sunmak hedeflenmiştir.