In this article, Babbitt discusses the concept of "serious" music, which he defines as music that is "not for the masses". He argues that this kind of music, which is often associated with the avant-garde, is not accessible to the general public and is therefore not a true art form. Babbitt defends the traditional art form against the modernist attack, and argues that the "serious" music of the past is just as valid as the music of the present. He also argues that the "serious" music of the past is more "comprehensive" than the modernist music of the present.

Babbitt's article is a response to a protest in High Fidelity magazine against the avant-garde. The protest was launched by a group of music critics who were concerned about the direction of contemporary music. Babbitt's article is a defense of the "serious" music of the past, and a criticism of the modernist music of the present.

Babbitt's article was widely read and it became a classic in the history of music criticism. It was cited by many other critics and scholars, and it helped to shape the debate about the direction of contemporary music.