

Research on the Expression of Nationality in Chinese Piano Music

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the national expression of Chinese piano music, including the connotation of nationality, the development process of Chinese piano music, the main characteristics of Chinese piano music national expression and the development of Chinese piano music art suggestions. From the early 20th century to the present, Chinese piano music not only reflects the Times and composers of different personalities, but also reflects a clear common and continuity. Composers of various periods consciously explored and practiced the combination of western composition techniques and Chinese musical tradition, and paid attention to the artistic conception and connotation of Chinese culture in their piano works. Taking Nationality as the main line and constantly pursuing “Chinese style of piano music” is the main vein of the development and evolution of Chinese piano music, and the fundamental formation of Chinese piano music art style, which reflects the cultural identity consciousness of Chinese composers. Nationality has become a national cultural identity label of Chinese piano music in the world music art, which has gradually developed from a formal expression to a cultural expression. In the process of absorbing western composition theory and integrating into the essence of Chinese culture, Chinese piano music has gradually formed its own view of cultural identity, showing Nationality. Only when Chinese piano music goes to the world can it have the value of cultural development. On the road of future development, it needs to insist on the expression of Nationality in many aspects such as creation, publication, performance, teaching and academic research.

Keywords: Music; Piano; Nationality; Expression

Introduction

Since the introduction of piano as a foreign instrument into China, piano composers have learned from the artistic techniques and creative methods of western piano music, constantly explored the path of localization and sinicization of piano music, and tried to create new piano music works with artistic charm by using the expression methods of Chinese folk music (Shen, 2014). Composers use material, melody, rhythm, mode and harmony of Chinese folk music to create new piano music works with artistic charm, giving them national character of China. At the beginning of the 20th century, after the baptism of the May Fourth Movement, the Chinization and local creation of western piano music also opened a new chapter in China. Chinese composers Zhao Yuanren and Xiao Youmei were the first to devote themselves to the local creation of piano music. They learned to adopt European piano techniques, broke the traditional Chinese linear monophonic system, and began to pay attention to harmony, melody, tonal layout and musical structure in their works. Zhao Yuanren composed the Peace March in 1915, marking the beginning of the road of Chinese piano music creation. Since then, Chinese musicians have well integrated China's traditional music culture into the creation of piano, and

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created many piano music works with Chinese style. Xiao Youmei created the piano music New Nishang Yuyi Dance. This piece of music is based on the structure of the big melody of Tang Dynasty to imitate the creation, which fully demonstrates the Chinese style in terms of creative techniques. Both melodic tone and harmonic color have full Chinese charm. Spring Thoughts is a piano accompaniment composed by Huang Zichuang. Although the basis of its creation comes from the classical harmony of Europe, it integrates the harmonic beauty of traditional Chinese music, showing a bright Oriental color (Zheng, 2014). In fact, these early piano music pieces have already started the way of Nationality expression. The creation of piano music Shepherd Boy Piccolo is a classic combination of western contrastive polyphony technology and Chinese backing polyphony, which makes the western composition theory and Chinese traditional music blend together. The piano music Combination of Long and Short Syllables created by Quan Zhihao is a classic work that expresses “Nationality” in modern times (Shi, 2019). This work combines tradition and modernity, takes the national melody as the basic beauty, integrates the rhythm of the Korean nationality music form, and embodies the national characteristics of the Korean nationality dance and singing. In the new era, more and more Chinese people enter the field of piano playing. Facing the foreign Musical Instruments and corresponding piano music works from western cultural context, Chinese hope to play more excellent piano music works with national characteristics. In the context of globalization, more Nationality expression in piano music art is also the due meaning of improving the soft power of national culture.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to make a thematic and systematic study on the national expression of Chinese piano music to provide a double reference system of rational speculation and artistic practice for the creation of Chinese piano works and the prosperity and development of Chinese piano art at present and in the future. First of all, this study explores the different cultural connotations of nationality in Chinese piano music to better understand the concept of nationality. Secondly, it takes the modern Chinese piano music creation as a main clue to analyze and study the national expression of Chinese piano music, and clarify the historical context of integrating national character into piano music creation. Thirdly, it takes specific Chinese piano music works as an example, and analyzes how to express the nationality of Chinese piano music by exploring how musicians integrate it into the creation process. Finally, it provides a useful reference for contemporary Chinese piano music creation, performance and teaching through a systematic study of the national expression of Chinese piano music.

Research Methodology

First of all, this study adopts the literature research method, makes full use of Chinese and English databases, books, Internet materials, music score materials, audiovisual materials and other channels to collect relevant materials about Chinese piano music, carrying out a holistic study on the corresponding piano works, and analyzing the literature materials by induction, thus forming a theoretical framework for research. Literature retrieval is a very important work, which is also the first step to carry out research. Through literature search, the author reviews the previous research, to fully understand the scholars' views and attitudes, and have a full understanding of the research status.

Secondly, this study adopts the method of historical research, using university library collections and historical archives to deeply collect relevant historical materials about Chinese piano music. By sorting out, analyzing and studying the historical records and relevant materials of Chinese piano music, it can sort out the basic context of the development history of Chinese piano music.

Finally, this study uses case analysis, comparative analysis and comprehensive analysis to analyze the national expression characteristics of Chinese piano music works. These characteristics are embodied in many aspects, such as including traditional music elements, drawing on the characteristics of folk music and national instruments, emotional expression and artistic conception construction, painting and story music, and reflecting natural elements, which together constitute the unique connotation of national expression of Chinese piano music.

Research Conceptual Framework

Chinese piano music

To understand the concept of Chinese piano music from a macro perspective, there are three semantic results: Chinese piano music, piano music created by Chinese people and piano music with Chinese cultural characteristics (Wen, 2021). These three interpretations interpret the information differently. First, Chinese piano music puts more emphasis on the national framework, that is, all piano activities within the territory of China, including the piano music practice activities of foreigners in China. Second, the piano music created by Chinese people mainly defines the identity label of composers, and emphasizes the achievements of Chinese piano music. So, some of their “westernized” works are also included. Third, piano music with Chinese cultural characteristics focuses on the cultural attributes of the works. That is, piano music works with national characteristics created on the basis of Chinese culture. The influence, value and embodiment of Chinese culture on piano music are mainly emphasized here, including piano music works created by foreign composers based on their understanding of Chinese culture. Understood from the macro level, the above several expressions are different, but they all seem to have a certain degree of rationality. Based on the above understanding, defining the concept of Chinese piano music is a complicated and multi-dimensional cultural attribute problem, which involves a series of key musical practices. The core of which should focus on the music works themselves. So, the form of Chinese piano music cannot be refined and represented only by some works, some composition and performance techniques, and some theoretical viewpoints (Liu, 2011). Especially in the context of the current integration of Chinese piano music with Western music, tradition and modernity, the definition of the concept has a direct impact on determining the future creation direction of the work and influencing the development trend of piano music. It needs to think about how to make Chinese piano music develop sustainably in the Chinese music and international music circles and highlight its own value, even from the height of the national music image. For the study of this paper, the definition of Chinese piano music is as follows: Chinese piano music is practiced by Chinese musicians as the main body, based on Chinese culture, combined with excellent technical means of both China and the West, and takes professional works that show Chinese music style, conform to the music aesthetics of Chinese audiences and have international communication as models. Through the medium of piano, Form a music category and art form that integrates creation, performance, education, teaching and theoretical research.

Nationality

In fact, there is a close relationship between “nation” and “nationality”. Nationality is the unique and significant characteristics of a nation, is the unique embodiment of the cultural tradition, historical experience and customs of the nation, which gives the nation and country a unique and easily recognizable characteristic, making it unique among all nations in the world (Ge, 2018). The nationality discussed in this paper is based on the perspective of the nation state, not limited to the level of race or specific ethnic minorities, and focuses on the modern era background, which makes the discussion more realistic significance and value. Different nations and individuals, based on their unique national background, survival values and practical experience, understand and transform the world in their own ways, thus shaping their own unique national culture. The construction of the nationality is gradually formed along with the evolution of history. It is not only a necessary condition for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, but also an important force for promoting global peace and development. From the perspective of cultural concepts, this is the inevitable requirement of constructing the subject consciousness of contemporary Chinese culture, carrying forward the national spirit and ceasing self-improvement. From a historical point of view, the 5000 years of Chinese civilization is a process of constantly absorbing the advanced culture of others and renewing its own culture (Lian, 2021). In the era of globalization, actively building an open and enterprising Chinese national cultural identity and national consciousness is an important contribution made by China to the development of world civilization. China's contemporary national confidence and sense of responsibility for human society should be based on the deep exploration of nationality.

Chinese “virtual & actual” theory

The two words “virtual” and “actual” can not only be interpreted literally as emptiness & truth, vagueness & clarity, fiction & reality, but also show the characteristics of complex & changeable, flexible & versatile in the Chinese context. In the Dictionary of Words and Expressions “virtual” is opposite to “actual”, the so-called “virtual is the beginning of all things”. This characteristic makes “virtual” and “actual” have great flexibility in the parts of speech, and can be changed into nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs, which provides rich possibilities for language expression. In artistic creation and criticism, the combination of “virtual” and “actual” shows unique aesthetic value, embodies the important characteristics of ambiguity and fuzziness, inheritance and variability, penetration and interpenetration, intuition and integrity, flexibility and randomness, and provides artists with a broad creative space. Artists can create colorful and far-reaching artistic works by using the techniques of “virtual” and “actual”. At the same time, the combination of “virtual” and “actual” also reflects the profound and unique aesthetic implication in the spirit of Chinese art, which is not only a reflection of the real world, but also a profound philosophical discussion of life, nature, and the universe. Through the use of “virtual” and “actual”, artists can express their unique understanding and perception of the world, and trigger the resonance and reflection of the audience. Therefore, “virtual” and “actual” are one of the guiding basic aesthetic principles in artistic creation and criticism, and are indispensable components of the Chinese artistic spirit. With their complex, changeable, flexible and versatile characteristics, they provide rich means and expression for artistic creation, and also bring profound aesthetic experience to the audience (Zhang, 2017).

Chinese piano context

Chinese piano context is a theoretical conception of piano composition proposed by piano composer Zhao Xiaosheng on the basis of the analysis of Chinese style piano works and western piano works. In practice and theoretical discussion, Zhao Xiaosheng has deeply explored the particularity of Chinese piano music, including the inherent Chinese traditional culture, the color of national expression, and the different characteristics of Western piano music. Chinese piano music has a completely different “discourse environment” from Western piano music in many aspects, including culture, thinking, image, realm and technology. Chinese piano music is deeply influenced by Chinese traditional culture and has a unique color of national expression, which makes it necessary to consider its specific cultural context when playing and appreciating (Lian, 2021). Based on these observations, Zhao Xiaosheng further put forward the theoretical conception of “Chinese piano context”. After thousands of years of cultural accumulation and the efforts of Chinese composers in recent decades, they have jointly created a unique expression mode and discourse environment of Chinese piano culture, which is completely different from the expression mode of Western piano culture and rich in profound Chinese cultural heritage. That is, the “Chinese piano context”, including rhyme, tone, tone, structure, rhythm, playing method and other parts.

The research on expression of Nationality in Chinese piano music discussed in this paper is based on the analysis of Nationality characteristics of Chinese piano music in Chinese “virtual & actual” theory and the Chinese piano context, and finally obtains specific Nationality expression characteristics, as shown in Figure 1.

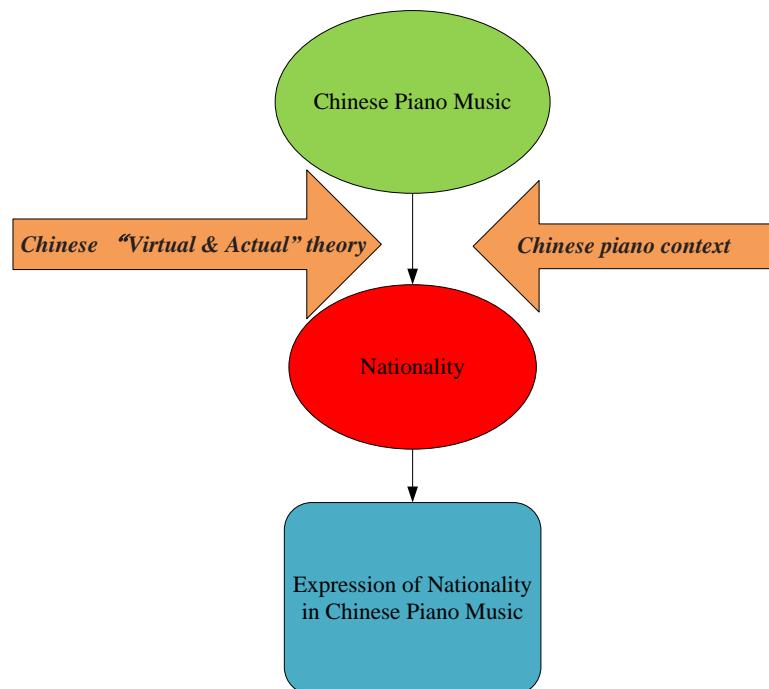


Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework

Research Findings

1. Development of Chinese piano music

The development process of Chinese piano music can be divided into four historical development periods, which are the initial development period, new development period, the tortuous development period and comprehensive development period.

Initial development period

This period was from 1915 to 1949. After the Opium War, the Qing government put forward the slogan of “learning from the barbarians to control the barbarians” and sent students to Japan or advanced countries in Europe and the United States to study. Among them, Japanese students are the backbone of the spread of piano music in China, such as Xiao Youmei, Zeng Zhimin, Shen Xingong, Li Shutong and so on. They were the first to introduce the western composition theory system into China. The epoch-making *Peace March* is the earliest piano work published in China, composed by Zhao Yuanren, and published in the *Science* magazine in 1915, which initiated the course of Chinese piano music creation. The composition technique of this work mainly imitates the traditional Western composition theory. And the innovation lies in the breakthrough of harmonic function, that is, the combination with the Chinese national tone. In the process of early Chinese piano music exploration, some works borrowed traditional Western compositional techniques in the creation mode, and integrated Chinese folk music into it. This is a qualitative leap in the early stage of Chinese piano music creation. After all, piano, as an “exotic product”, needs a long exploration process to be integrated into China. After 1919, intellectuals were eager to further absorb the advanced scientific achievements of the West. The piano works that reflect the people’s life and the characteristics of the eras and can make the audience easy to understand became one of the creative characteristics of Chinese piano music in this period. The piano works of this period mainly draw on the melodies of folk songs with regional characteristics. Works in this area include Li Rongshou’s piano piece *Saw Big VAT* (1921), Xiao Youmei’s piano piece *New Costume Dance* (1923), Lao Zhicheng’s piano piece *Autumn Sonata* (1932). During the 12 years from 1937 to 1949, the Chinese nation was ravaged by war. All sectors of society actively participated in the national salvation and survival movement. The piano music of this period was mostly composed of works that reflected the spirit of Anti-Japanese War and eulogized national heroes. The major works include Zhang Xiaohu’s *Piano Concerto* (1945), Ma Sicong’s *Piano Quintet* (1945) and Zhu Gongyi’s *Peking Rhapsody* (1948).

New development period

This period was from 1949 to 1966. Since the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the piano art has entered a stable development stage. During this period, the government attached great importance to the development of culture and art, and successively restructured and established the Central Conservatory of Music and the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, aiming to train musical talents for the new China. The piano gradually spread in China. In the creation of piano music, in response to the literary and artistic policy of “Let a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools contend”, the composers at that time created a large number of piano works. In the seventeen years to 1966, at least 363 of works were published. For example, Wang Lishan adapted and composed *Arethusa flower* based on the folk songs of northern Shaanxi in 1953. In 1950 and 1955, Ding Shande composed the *First Xinjiang Dance Music* and the *Second Xinjiang Dance Music* combined with the national characteristics of Xinjiang music. These two works of Ding Shande draw heavily on music from Xinjiang. The work has a strong national style, and vividly describes the life of Xinjiang people riding the grassland

with singing and dancing. In 1955, Jiang Zuxin composed the piano suite *Temple Fair*, which became another typical example of the nationalization of Chinese piano creation. In 1959, Chen Peixun composed *Summer's Thunderstorm* combining Guangdong folk music. These piano music works all use different folk music materials. The piano works of this period have strong Chinese characteristics, which not only express people's happy mood after the founding of New China, but also express people's yearning for music with different regional colors.

Tortuous development period

This period was from 1966 to 1976. After the 1960s, Sino-Soviet relations gradually deteriorated, coupled with domestic natural disasters and the turbulent decade of the "Cultural Revolution", seriously affected the development of piano in China's musical art. After 1966, a large number of literary and artistic workers were sent down to labor reform. And the Central Conservatory of Music and Shanghai Conservatory of Music were also suspended. The development of Chinese piano music entered a decade of relative stagnation. Although the political environment was severe, the composers at that time still made unremitting efforts to preserve the piano music in the posture of serving politics, and pushed the creation to a new situation, that is, the piano arrangement with "red characteristics". The piano creation was mainly based on the adaptation of Chinese traditional folk music or popular model operas at that time. The piano accompaniment *The Red Lantern* adapted by Yin Chengzong based on the model opera, which is a combination of piano music and Beijing Opera artistic characteristics, creating a new channel for piano music to explore the national. Since then, many piano accompaniments based on red song and dance operas have appeared, such as Yang Liqing's piano accompaniment of the *White Haired Girl* (1968), Yin Chengzong's piano concerto *The Yellow River* (1969), Huang Anlun's piano accompaniment *Cuckoo Mountain* (1970) and so on. In addition to the adaptation of revolutionary model operas, there are also piano works adapted from traditional Chinese folk music pieces, such as Huang Huwei's *Fantasy of Jialing River*, Li Yinghai's *Sunset Drums*, Chu Wanghua's *Moonlight on The Pond* and so on. The exploration of localization of piano works in this period is not only reflected in the use of folk music melody or pentatonic scale, but also pay more attention to the connotation of national culture into the works. The use of rhythm is more complex and close to the performance characteristics of traditional national songs and dances. The use of harmony gradually gets rid of the harmonic structure dominated by triad overlap. It began to use the color harmony with national areas.

Overall development period

This period is from 1976 to the present. After the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee, a large number of literary and artistic workers returned to the creative position. The development of piano music also showed unprecedented vitality. The introduction of foreign modern composition theory and technology and the introduction of modern piano works constantly stimulated the rapid development of Chinese piano music. During this period, the development of piano was closely linked with the development trend of international music creation. And the creation of piano music gradually tended to the trend of diversification, which opened the all-round development period of Chinese piano music works. In the creative conception, the use of tonality was also more diversified, and no longer limited to the traditional composition thinking in terms of pitch. Considerations of rhythm, timing, and timbre were common in piano works of this period. After the development in China for half a century, the piano music began to integrate with the trend of western contemporary music, and

use the composing technique of serialism. This not only enriches the vocabulary of nationalized music creation, but also endows pentatonic music with new connotation. The piano works using the technique of serialism include Wang Lishan's *Dream of Heaven* (1982), Chen Yi's *Eight Plates* (1999), and Luo Zhongrong's *Three Piano Pieces* (1986). In the creation of these works, most of them used atonal musical vocabulary. And some used the composer's self-created techniques. The exploration of the creative integration of European and American emerging theories and national styles of China has always been the core thinking of piano works in this period.

Since piano music was introduced into China, composers began to explore the localization of piano music. Through the attempts of composers in different periods, they gradually formed a view of cultural identity that was different from the West and made it Nationality. In the early 20th century, composers imitated the composition techniques of Europe and the United States, and integrated folk songs or pentatonic factors into the creation of piano music in the 1920s and 1930s. Since 1949, composers have created piano music that reflects people's lives by taking folk minor keys as material and absorbing advanced Western composing techniques. Although the development of piano music from 1966 to 1976 was relatively slow due to special historical reasons, it was preserved in another way. Until China's reform and opening-up, the development of piano music showed a diversified trend. In the combing of history, it can be found that although the piano is an "exotic product" for the Chinese people, it has been inseparable from Chinese cultural life after a century of development. It is deeply rooted in the context of Chinese traditional folk music, and still vigorous after a special historical period. Chinese piano music constantly absorbs and innovates the emerging Western composition theories, and forms its own cultural identity, which ensures that piano music is enduring in the development of Chinese music culture.

2. Main characteristics of Chinese piano music Nationality expression

With the development of Chinese piano music, in the process of absorbing western composition theories and integrating into the essence of Chinese culture, it has gradually formed its own cultural identity view, showing Nationality. The main characteristics of Chinese piano music Nationality expression lie in the following aspects.

Containing elements of traditional music

Traditional Chinese music is based on the pentatonic scale, which differs from the seven-tone scale of Western music. Pentatonic scale refers to the five notes of the scale. Their pitch ratio is 1:9:5:4:3. The use of this scale gives Chinese music the unique tone. In traditional Chinese music performance, musicians often emphasize the interval between sounds. Not all sounds are emphasized, leaving a certain space, giving the audience a sense of unfinished. For example, Chu Wanghua's *Moonlight on The Pond* is a solo piano adaptation of a traditional Chinese Erhu tune. Despite the piano performance, the composer retained the characteristics of Erhu as much as possible through the musical structure and melody. This piece of music is based on the pentatonic scale, showing the unique rhythm of Chinese classical music.

Drawing on the characteristics of folk music and folk instruments

Chinese folk music and Musical Instruments have rich and diverse characteristics, such as the horse head string instrument, Erhu, flute and so on. Chinese piano music may imitate the special timbre and playing techniques of these instruments to create a musical effect with the characteristics of traditional Chinese instruments. Xian Xinghai's piano piece *Yellow River Cantata* is based on the Chinese folk song, with the aim of combining the characteristics of Chinese folk music with Western classical music to create a musical effect with the

characteristics of traditional Chinese instruments. Based on the Chinese folk song *Yellow River Cantata*, the piece mimics the timbre and playing skills of ethnic instruments such as Erhu and flute on piano to show the characteristics of traditional Chinese instruments. In the piano music, special effects such as simulated the vibrato, glissando and bow string of Erhu can be heard, as well as simulated flute playing timbre.

Emotional expression and artistic conception

Chinese piano music often takes emotion as the core, trying to express colorful emotions and artistic conception through music, such as the perception of natural scenery, life philosophy, historical stories, etc. This kind of emotional expression is often to express homesickness, nostalgia, open-minded and other emotions. Zhang Chao's piano adaptation *In that Faraway Place* is famous for its soft melody, rich emotion and profound connotation. The piano music expresses nostalgia in a soft, lyrical way. The melody reveals the missing of the past, so that people cannot help but recall the past time, feel the passage of years. The artistic conception outlined through music, such as the vast mountains, blue sky, white clouds, and sparkling lake, makes people feel like they are there.

Painting and story music

Chinese piano music draws on the imagery of Chinese painting and the plots of literature sometimes, to draw pictures or tell stories through music. For example, the artistic conception of landscape painting or ancient myths and legends are shown through the music. The plot outlined by music makes the work more story-telling and rich imagination space. *Lushan Ballad* is a piano piece composed by Chinese composer Zhao Jiping based on the ancient Chinese literary work. It was originally a long poem created by the Tang Dynasty poet Li Bai, describing the beauty and inner feelings of the poet when he visited Lushan. Zhao Jiping adapted the poem to piano music to depict the poet's journey and mood in Lushan. In this piano music, the artistic conception of landscape painting can be felt. The melody is smooth and like the ups and downs between mountains and rivers. Through the music, it seems that can see the mountains and rivers, waterfalls and streams, and feel the poet's praise of the natural scenery and the meditation of the mood. This creative method makes the music work more pictorial and narrative, allowing the listener to immerse themselves in it and imagine themselves in the scene.

Reflecting natural elements

Nature plays an important role in Chinese culture. Chinese piano music may simulate the sounds of nature, such as wind, rain, river, etc., and take natural scenery and elements as the inspiration for music creation. The creator conveys the emotions and moods associated with nature through the music. Huang Zi's piano piece *Guangling Verse* was adapted from ancient qin music. The music contains a wealth of natural elements, such as the leisurely river, wind and grass. Through music to simulate the sound of nature and express the natural scenery. During the performance, the pianist will use specific playing techniques and musical expressions to simulate the flow of the river, the sound of the wind blowing the leaves, and the peace and grandeur of the natural scenery. This kind of creation makes the piano works full of the depiction of nature and praise for the beauty of nature. Such examples show that Chinese piano music simulates the sounds of nature through music and takes nature as creative inspiration to convey the emotions and moods associated with nature.

Discussion

With the acceleration of the process of globalization and the increase of cultural exchanges, piano music, as an important representative of western music culture, has gradually been widely disseminated and developed in the world. However, in the process of internationalization of piano music, how to maintain its national characteristics and cultural connotation has become an urgent problem to be solved. As a country with a long history of music, Chinese traditional music culture has unique charm and value. Therefore, the study of the expression of Nationality in Chinese piano music not only helps to promote the innovation and development of Chinese piano music, but also provides a new artistic style and expression form for the international piano music industry (Deng, 2020).

The main characteristics of the expression of Nationality in Chinese piano music lie in the inclusion of Chinese traditional music elements, the reference to the characteristics of Chinese folk songs and instrumental music and the expression of Chinese traditional art content. In the creation of piano music, it integrates the tone melody, harmony system and musical form structure of traditional Chinese music, which makes its works have distinct national characteristics. By using the pentatonic scale of traditional Chinese music, the fluctuations of melody and the unique harmonic treatment, piano music not only retains its original charm, but also shows its unique Oriental flavor (Hu, 2021). In terms of expression, piano music draws on the characteristics of Chinese folk songs and national instrumental music, making its expression more diversified. Chinese folk songs have beautiful melody and sincere emotion, while national instrumental music has unique timbre and playing skills. These elements are cleverly integrated into the creation of piano music, which makes the works not only have the elegance and nobility of piano, but also lose the charm and emotion of Chinese music. In addition, piano music also embodies its national character through the expression of traditional Chinese art content. Chinese literature, Chinese painting, Chinese calligraphy, Chinese opera and other art forms have profound cultural heritage and artistic charm, piano music in the creation of these elements into them, through music melody, rhythm and timbre and other means, to show the essence and connotation of traditional Chinese art. This not only enriches the expression of piano music, but also makes its works more profound and connotation (Shuai, 2021).

When playing Chinese piano music, it is necessary to deeply understand and control its playing technique and style. The performer must have a deep understanding of the nationality elements contained in the music, including the understanding of the connotation of Chinese culture, the grasp of the three-dimensional sense and line in the music, and the familiarity with the characteristics of Chinese national instruments. Through in-depth study of these elements, players can more accurately grasp the essence of Chinese piano music, so as to better show its style characteristics in performance. In addition, the player needs to master the exquisite touch skills, including the skilled use of fingering, accurate control of strength, the appropriate grasp of speed and the clever play of timbre (Wang, 2021). Through the use of these skills, players can accurately interpret the melody and rhythm of Chinese piano music, so that the works are more vivid. In addition, the performer also needs to pay attention to the rhythm of the performance. Chinese piano music pays attention to the free change of rhythm and the treatment of blank space, which requires players to have a keen sense of rhythm and rich imagination. By skillfully handling the rhythm changes of different passages, as well as the rational use of white space techniques, the performer can create a profound musical mood and arouse the infinite imagination of the audience. The use of the pedal is also an important

part of playing Chinese piano music (Zhang, 2020). Players need to flexibly use the sound pedal, weak tone pedal and sustained tone pedal, to enhance the level of music and expression. Through rational use of pedals, players can better show the charm and characteristics of Chinese piano music, so that the works are more perfect and moving.

Recommendation

1. Practical Recommendations

The global cultural communication brought by economic globalization and media technology innovation has become the development trend of the 21st century. Chinese piano music must go to the world and enter into the great circulation and exchange of world culture and art, in order to have the value of cultural development. This puts forward requirements for the creation, publication, performance, teaching and academic research of Chinese piano music.

Music creation

For Chinese piano music to go to the world, high-quality works are the key. How to solve the two contradictions in music creation, namely “Tradition and Innovation” and “Nationality and cosmopolitanism”, has always been a hot topic discussed in Chinese music circles. Tradition is often linked to Chineseness, while innovation is linked to cosmopolitanism. On the relationship between tradition and innovation, it should emphasize the concept of innovative development. On the one hand, tradition is not immutable, but constantly changing. Huang Xiangpeng once said, “Tradition is a river.” This pithy metaphor is a revealing for this. On the other hand, the purpose of inheriting tradition is to create something new. The Nationality in Chinese piano works reflects the continuation of Chinese musical tradition. But music creation should also have the characteristics of the Times and personalities. It is not enough for Chinese piano music creation to pursue Nationality only by using Chinese elements. It should also reflect the characteristics of the Times and the artistic personality of the composer while reflecting the Nationality. The essence of the problem of “Timeliness” of music is to regain the unity of content and form from the meaning of artistic creation. Chinese piano works always try to express the unity of Chinese spiritual connotation and modern composition techniques. As far as artistic personality is concerned, since the end of the 20th century in China, political interference in literature and art has been greatly reduced. The diversified understanding of Nationality will be more conducive to the full play of the composer’s creative personality, and will certainly bring vitality to contemporary music life.

Chinese piano music creation must be guided by Nationality and strive to find the balance point between tradition and reality, the balance point between Chinese and Western culture. It is necessary not only to integrate into the trend of world culture, but also to maintain the personality and character of national culture, that is, the distinct Nationality. In 1935, Qi Erpin said, “The more national Chinese piano music is, the more international it is.” Facing the developing reality of world music culture, composers should hold a clear idea of Chinese national cultural identity and make a wise choice of numerous forms and means of artistic expression on the contemporary cultural soil. It is necessary to obtain rich musical nourishment and creative inspiration from the essence of Chinese traditional culture and national aesthetic taste, and create excellent piano works that can not only reflect the charm of Chinese culture but also reflect the spirit of the Times.

Music communication

Compared with the last century, the current publication of Chinese piano works has made a lot of progress, and has broken the phenomenon that there are always those popular “old pieces” repeated in various collections. More works began to be published in addition to journals and officially published piano scores and thus widely circulated. The closed cultural policy in the 20th century and the barrier of Chinese language and culture led to the lack of foreigners’ understanding of Chinese piano music. Since the reform and opening up, the increasing cultural exchanges between China and the West seem to position Chinese music culture more in Chinese folk music. The rise of Chinese composers in the international music world is more based on the “new music” mixed with various Chinese and Western cultural concepts and performance forms. It is imperative to publish and distribute Chinese piano works in foreign languages to the world. This is the first step for Chinese piano music to enter the international music stage.

Music creation and performance are inseparable. They are the two pillars that make music have artistic vitality. Both are indispensable. But there always seem to be only a handful of Chinese piano pieces that are performed in China’s public musical life. More works are just musical art on paper. For example, some Chinese piano works that have won awards in various competitions seem to fade from the public view of performance and teaching after the games. Only a few have been the subject of musical scholarship. It is a long-term systematic project how to truly connect these award-winning pieces with the discipline construction, grade examination and concert performance pieces of Chinese piano, to known and accepted by more people. Chinese piano players should not only play foreign classic works well and inherit the excellent tradition of the world’s piano art, but also strive to play Chinese piano works well and be an unswerving disseminator of Chinese piano music.

2. Recommendation for future research

As a form of contemporary Chinese music, the development of Chinese piano music is closely related to the changes of Chinese traditional culture and society as well as the literature and art policy in China. The Nationality and Internationalism of Chinese piano music represent the fusion of Chinese and Western cultures. The study of Chinese piano music in the overall cultural background includes not only the technical analysis of the music ontology, but also the discussion of the non-musical and cultural factors implied in the music. It is an inevitable way to study Chinese piano music to make a comparative study of the parts which are strongly influenced by the West and their transformation under the Chinese cultural environment.

It is the cultural source of the development of Chinese piano music to show some characteristics of Chinese culture in the most traditional form of Western culture and make it have explicit or implicit Nationality. It also reflects the composer’s “inheritance and sublation” of Chinese cultural tradition. In the international community, piano music is a global common language more than any other form of music. Piano music has been widely popular all over the world and has become a common medium to spread different musical cultures. The piano music has become a more acceptable form of music in China. It is necessary to study the overall cultural characteristics of Chinese piano music and analyze the Nationality of some excellent Chinese piano music works, to show the compatibility of Chinese and Western culture and the characteristics of Chinese cultural identity. It is necessary to discuss its role in internal cultural inheritance and cross-cultural communication. This cultural interpretation has typical significance for showing the collision and change of contemporary Chinese culture and

Western culture. And it should also have enlightenment for the development strategy of Chinese culture in the current trend of economic and cultural globalization.

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