

The Creation and Performance Characteristics of Yunnan Folk Piano Music

Hu Beihui and Arthorn Thanawat

Bangkokthonburi University, Thailand

Corresponding Author, E-mail: nicha.musiced@gmail.com

Abstract

Yunnan ethnic piano works are rooted in the soil of Yunnan ethnic minority music, integrating the historical development, folk customs, social culture and national feelings of each ethnic group into every note, every melody, every beat and every musical vocabulary, reflecting and expressing the characteristics of each ethnic group. Its development process is not limited to learning from and absorbing excellent western musical cultural achievements, but also from the perspective of developing national music culture, expanding the expression forms of minority music, and promoting the modern creative methods of national music. The collision between the western musical art represented by the Western musical instrument and the local folk music of Yunnan makes Chinese piano music creation more diversified. At the same time, the Yunnan ethnic piano works not only maintain the internal unity of music and culture, but also highlight the melody characteristics of each ethnic group, and enhance the artistic realm and cultural connotation of Yunnan minority music. Although the number of Yunnan national piano works is not very large, although these works need to accept more tests, it is undeniable that these Yunnan national piano works, whether they are rearranged folk music or original music, have high application value for transforming teaching concepts and updating teaching contents in piano teaching.

Keywords: Creation; Performance; Characteristics; Yunnan Folk; Piano; Music

Introduction

The piano has been introduced into China for nearly a hundred years. As one of the traditional western Musical Instruments, it is not difficult to truly integrate into China, an ancient civilization with a long history of 5,000 years. Ancient China has a rich national culture and artistic heritage, and the colorful national music is accumulated by the Chinese people using the national language created by themselves for thousands of years.

After the Opium War, with the entry of Western missionaries, the art of piano also entered China. With thousands of years of culture, the Chinese nation has always had the temperament to absorb foreign things and adopted an inclusive policy. The rise of the new culture movement stimulated the promotion of piano culture in some aspects. Some literati began to actively participate in the creation of piano music, and the piano was highly respected by many music lovers (Wang, 2019).

At the beginning of the 20th century, since Zhao Yuanren created China's first piano work "March for Peace", composers began to prepare the nationalization of Chinese piano music creation, they continue to explore the musical resources of different regions and different nationalities, and use new creative methods to express the sound effect with Chinese national charm. After a hundred years of continuous exploration and pursuit, gradually formed with Chinese style piano music creation techniques and aesthetic value.

Since the 1950s, in the process of learning and practicing from Western composition techniques, Chinese composers have gradually found that the creation of Chinese folk songs into piano music can be better recommended to the vast audience, and then a large number of folk song piano music began to come out. Folk songs are popular in all regions of China, conveying the lives, thoughts and aspirations of people in all regions. Its unique singing and spreading characteristics make it an important component in the course of Chinese national music. The tunes of folk songs have the characteristics of agility, improvisation and mass, and most folk songs freely use a lot of expression techniques, especially the use of homophony, lingo, metaphor, exaggeration and other rhetorical devices to express the drama of folk songs, humorous and interesting techniques, full of characteristics (Shi, 2019).

Therefore, Chinese composers Wang Jianzhong, Chu Wanghua, Zhu Jianer, etc. all adopted folk song materials for adaptation, and all selected "Yunnan folk songs" as creative materials, such as Liao Shengjing's "Night of the Torch Festival" and Wang Jianzhong's "Five Yunnan Folk Songs". These excellent works, both elegant and popular, are indispensable treasures in the library of Chinese piano music, and are also the concentrated embodiment of Chinese piano nationalization, indicating the important position of Yunnan folk music in the creation of Chinese piano works.

Yunnan is the province where most ethnic minorities live. Besides the Han nationality, there are 25 ethnic minorities in Yunnan. There are not only beautiful natural scenery and rich folk culture of ethnic minorities, but also colorful and colorful musical resources of ethnic minorities, which has the reputation of "the sea of folk songs". (Wang Lisha, 2021) It is such a rich treasure house of minority music that attracts the attention of musicians, inspires their creative enthusiasm, and gives birth to a series of excellent Yunnan national piano works. It can be said that this style of piano works is not due to the special preferences of a group of composers, but has always been formed along with the development of Chinese piano music. It is a Chinese aesthetic way to understand the art of piano, and it is produced in the process of creating and transforming new musical art.

With the further development of college education in our country, college education must undertake the mission of preserving, inheriting and developing national music culture. However, reflecting on the current situation of piano teaching in colleges and universities: Due to the strong influence of Western culture and the long-term implementation of music education based on the western professional music education system, on the one hand, the young generation of piano teachers do not like Chinese music (except pop songs), gradually distance themselves from and even feel "strange" to Chinese culture and tradition, and lack a deep understanding of the artistic and cultural value of Chinese piano works (Li, 2004). Most of the teaching aspects of Chinese piano works are limited to solving the problem of students' playing skills, while the cultural connotation and style charm of music are often limited to the interpretation of musical aspects, and the research on the original appearance of musical materials, the cultural background they depend on and the deep core of style charm are very

few. On the other hand, the vast majority of Chinese students like Western classical piano literature, but do not like and do not play Chinese piano works well, and some even think superficially that Chinese piano works are too simple and backward. The lack of piano education based on national music culture has a negative impact on depth and breadth.

The creation and performance characteristics of Yunnan folk piano music

Creation Features

When the composer rearranges the piano music of Yunnan folk songs, most of the methods are faithful to the original works, and they make obvious and even showy adaptations in timbre, line, harmony, playing techniques, etc., to fully express the content and thoughts expressed in the original folk songs. From the aspect of performance, the most important role of Chinese piano arrangement lies in the development of sound. Here, one or two examples can be given to analyze the treatment of Yunnan regional culture, multi-culture and Chinese and Western culture in piano performance applied by composers in their creation. For example, in Zhu Jianer's suite "Impression of the South", the first "Flower Dance" and the fifth "Alili", the composer deals with the Buyi folk song "Pretty Red Flowers" and the Naxi folk song in the structural form of variations respectively. Each variation has a new meaning, sometimes with the treatment of rhythm and mode, sometimes with the combination of melody decoration and tone. The elegant and exciting sound effect not only shows the chic and calm life state of the Buyi people in the noise of bronze drums, but also the lively mood of the Naxi people in the cheerful collective dance. In the "Five Yunnan Folk Songs" (2), "Shepherd Tune", created by Zhu Jianer, after the theme of the original folk songs was presented, the composer seized the unique characteristics of the piano's wide vocal range, made certain changes in the harmonic color and texture form, and the repetition of the second elevation of the octave created a profound and long artistic conception, just like the echo on the grassland. When the composer expresses the external regional style of the folk songs, he also creatively adds the methods of degree contrast, the change of timbres and the change of pedals to express the unique characteristics of mountains, echoes of hollow valleys, farming and so on. At the same time, using the piano to show the suona, erhu, GaoHu, dulcimer, Zheng, Yueqin, flute, Xiao, Xun, pipe, plate, gong, drum, cymbal, willow qin, ruan, bell and other sounds is the outstanding contribution of Chinese piano music to the development of the world piano music culture (Rao, 2002).

In the more than 100 years since Zhao Yuanren created the first piano music in China, Chinese composers have fully explored various artistic processing techniques, made use of sound materials with traditional Chinese style, and created many excellent pieces, especially in the performance of Yunnan music culture, showing unique geographical advantages. Make the piano this western instrument in the performance of Chinese national culture, different regional cultures become the finishing touch, just right.

Performance Characteristics

The prominence and emphasis on music language

Most of Chinese folk songs are based on folk minor keys passed from mouth to mouth. After being refined and sung by folk artists and spread over a long period of time, some excellent folk songs can continue to emerge. Therefore, Chinese folk songs are different from Western music, which is mostly composed by composers according to their own creative characteristics and emotional states. The most prominent feature of Chinese folk songs is the colloquial music language and multiple ways of expression. As we all know, different kinds of music have different languages, for example, songs are composed of lyrics and melodies, but it is not necessary to use words to play Musical Instruments such as piano, let alone the widely different dialects or tones of folk. However, people can completely tell the content of language through the way the piano is played, and many famous instrumentalists in the world, such as the pianists Horowitz and Bernstein, and the violinists Alcanjello Corelli, Perlman and Asha Hefetz, are just like this. So how to use the piano to tell the language of Yunnan folk songs? Let's analyze this piece by the dialect's tone and tone.

Dali girl's music the opening of this piece looks very simple, and the whole work seems to have no technical difficulties. But in fact, this kind of works on the grasp of musical language is particularly important, but also quite difficult, which requires us to pay high attention to this problem.

This part is the main section of Dali Girl, one of the Five Yunnan Folk Songs compiled and created by composer Wang Jianzhong. This section is composed of four phrases, and the syncopation is the characteristic of its musical language. First of all, the player needs to pay attention to the problem of dealing with the intensity level of the syncopation playing, in other words, to first set a suitable intensity for the whole paragraph, and then assign the corresponding intensity to each phrase on the basis of the total intensity. The first phrase is an overall strength, which can send the theme melody calmly, the second phrase is an imitation of the first phrase, and the sentence structure is almost the same. The second phrase should be lighter than the first phrase, and the two sentences form a certain contrast. The third phrase plays the role of "taking over and combining", which has undergone some changes compared with the first and second phrase. The overall intensity should be strengthened from the second phrase as the pitch rises, and the fourth phrase should gradually weaken in the third phrase as the pitch increases, and the whole passage ends in a smooth atmosphere. This kind of treatment seems simple, but it is difficult to control the melody color of each phrase, and take this control as a habit, some people speak "vivid", but some people speak is "ordinary" or even "coarse atmosphere" intonation, different in intensity. In the performance of "Dali Girl", the difference here is still very big, and the same is true for some other piano music adapted from folk songs. Therefore, we should continue to speculate and analyze to accumulate experience. Secondly, the only rhythmic feature of this paragraph is the syncopation. Therefore, when performing the syncopation, the performer should not only reflect the different characteristics between each phrase and the phrase, but also give a high degree of combination with the overall strength of the paragraph. For example, the eighth notes in the syncopation of the first and second phrases should be played weaker and shorter, so as to highlight the sense of coherence between the eighth notes and the quarter notes in the front. Since the syncopation is placed behind the third phrase, the syncopation should be played more prominently and emphasized, and the integrity should be paid attention to, reflecting the

variability of this characteristic rhythm. To the fourth phrase should immediately return to the previous performance state, and gradually weaken the syncopation rhythm, forming a consistent and lyrical music whole in the whole paragraph. About the special tone, everyone will have different understanding and expression, but there is still a certain regularity, the key is how to deal with it, because everyone's cognition is not the same, so every performer should design and think about this problem (Bian, 1996).

Focus on contrasting artistic treatment

In China, the creation of piano music has a hundred years of history, and more than half a century before us, piano music adapted from folk songs gradually appeared in a large-scale form. In this large-scale new form of creation, contrasting description means is one of the most commonly used by composers, such as harmonic contrast, structural contrast, texture and tone contrast, speed contrast and intensity contrast (Huang, 2019). The reason for this is, in a word, that the piano has a very rich musical expression techniques, while the folk songs around China are wonderful in tune, but the rich expression methods of the piano are somewhat monotonous. Therefore, in order to get closer to the tone of the original folk songs, and at the same time, to highlight the rich expression methods of the piano as the king of Musical Instruments, many composers have chosen "contrast" to adapt traditional Chinese folk songs.

Handling and performance as a piano

Yunnan folk piano music shows a lot of piano music playing skills, which shows that the concept of "Chinese and Western music" has emerged in China in the 1950s, and has been valued by composers. It has far-reaching significance to serve the performance and creation of Chinese folk music with Western piano playing techniques and skills. And its joint point is through the "melting" of music writing, thus, the whole work has been welcomed and praised by music players, composers and music lovers in recent decades, but also provides a great performance space for piano players. To use piano as instrumental music to express Chinese folk songs requires continuous research and accumulation of experience. It is not only necessary to have a broad understanding of a large number of folk songs suitable for piano music adaptation in various regions of China, but also to constantly explore the characteristics and laws of ethnic languages in various regions, and even to have a certain research and understanding of intonation, tone, breathing and other aspects of musical language. Master some of the creative characteristics and skills, which is also the folk song piano composer must master. In addition, we need to make full and scientific use of the technical characteristics of piano music, give full play to the advantages of piano performance, to express Chinese folk songs and traditional music art forms such as opera and rap. However, it is particularly important to note that all the sources of these theories must come from people's pursuit and love for traditional Chinese music culture, only by tirelessly analyzing and studying works, one day, Chinese folk piano music will occupy a place in the forest of world art .

The practical strategies of Yunnan folk piano music in teaching

The correct performance techniques of Chinese folk music works shall be taught to the students

In today's society, culture and art are developing rapidly and in the direction of diversification, and the forms of artistic expression are more abundant. Although different composers have different understandings and cognition of artistic works, it is the common goal of every composer to show the traditional Chinese flavor in their works. Chinese national piano works are generally based on the melody of ethnic folk songs, and embellish notes are added to the harmony, texture and other structures to reflect the distinct and strong national characteristics. The national music style is reflected in the timbre, melody, harmony and rhythm of the works. It is necessary to fully understand the historical source and creation background of Chinese music works, analyze the characteristics and special playing techniques of Chinese music works, and fully express the artistic conception connotation of Chinese traditional music characteristics in the works through mastering the flexible and changeable playing techniques (Wang, 2023). In piano works of folk music style, composers often adjust timbre and add grace notes according to the singing effect of folk music and the singing characteristics of folk songs. In the performance, it is necessary to use different methods of control strength, finger touching keys, the use of pedals and the Chinese "sound rhyme" and "air rhyme" in the work to express the national characteristics of the sound effect. In terms of mastering the style of folk music, we must first understand the characteristics of the piano instrument and folk songs, learn from the way of piano playing or the form of folk songs singing, and adjust the method of touching the keys of fingers to achieve special acoustics. Through the relationship between the sound and the sound, the strength and length of the sound, with fast touch key, slow touch key, finger touch key, shallow touch key touch method to imitate the performance. On the basis of daily learning, students are encouraged to participate in piano master classes, open classes and other activities to improve the learning effect.

Strengthen the national concept

The dominant player in piano teaching activities is the teacher, who imparts teaching ideas and contents to students in the teaching process, which has a subtle influence on their cognition. First of all, educators themselves should have a strong national consciousness. They play an irreplaceable role in promoting and inheriting the development of Chinese traditional music culture. No matter they are piano skills teachers or music theory teachers, they should have the consciousness and quality of inheriting national culture. They should not only have a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the teaching content of piano works of folk songs, but also have a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the teaching content of piano works of folk songs. It is also necessary to purposefully integrate Chinese traditional music works into the piano teaching classroom, so as to promote national culture and guide and cultivate students' love for these traditional music piano works. Piano teachers shoulder the heavy responsibility of piano teaching, facing the piano learners, the teacher's behavior also has the most direct influence on the students (Wang, 2020). The basic job of teachers is to impart knowledge and skills, but the deeper task of teachers is to educate people. On the surface, piano teachers are teaching knowledge and skills related to piano performance,

but from a deeper level, they are helping students to shape a sound personality through music education, and establishing students' aesthetic consciousness and sense of identity for traditional Chinese music. Teachers should infect and edify students through their own artistic accomplishment, personality charm and aesthetic experience, which is particularly important for the cultivation of students' national consciousness. Therefore, piano teachers should first enhance their national concepts and artistic accomplishment.

Piano learners learn deeply the profound cultural background and ethnic thoughts behind Yunnan national piano works, which is an important way to improve students' musical accomplishment and cultivate students' aesthetic taste. Piano learners need to have full experience and cognition of these folk music works, that is, to know and grasp the living environment, social conditions, national emotions, character and temperament of people in different regions, and to understand and inherit the excellent history, culture, artistic works and aesthetic thoughts of all nationalities. Only the students who deeply understand the essence of various ethnic cultures and absorb the rich nutrients of national culture can play the music that is smart and fresh, and only the players who consciously establish a strong national consciousness and integrate deep national feelings into the performance can interpret the music to truly shake the hearts of the audience. Therefore, piano learners should consciously establish national consciousness, root piano learning in the fertile soil of Yunnan folk music, and truly participate in and promote the development of Chinese traditional music in piano education.

Integrate Yunnan folk song piano music into the classroom

When people appreciate works of art, sometimes they may have the feeling of being in the scene, as if they can directly touch the era in which the artwork is located. This is the difference between art and science, and art can truly reflect the state of life. The basic feature of artistic expression is figurative, that is to say, art is a special way to reflect real life. The depiction of images plays an important role in any art form. In order to integrate Yunnan folk piano music into the college classroom, we must first fully absorb the essence and nutrients of Yunnan folk music. In the artistic expression form of folk song piano performance, we should pay special attention to the expression of its charm, and play the beautiful and rounded sound. In Chinese aesthetic thought, "rhyme" has high aesthetic value and is considered as the highest aesthetic category. "Rhyme leads to life, rhyme leads to death; Rhyme is elegant, no rhyme is vulgar; Rhyme is ringing, no rhyme is sinking; Rhyme is far, no rhyme is bureau" (Ming Dynasty Lu Shiwei" poetry mirror "). This paragraph fully surface: "rhyme" is an important way to express emotions, but also the essence of Chinese national music art (Liu, 2023).

Actively use technology to enrich music classes

With the rapid development of information technology in today's world, scientific and technological means are widely used in education and teaching activities. In order to make music classes more attractive, colleges and universities can actively use scientific and technological teaching means to build a new system of modern music courses for students when teaching music courses. For example, the application of scientific and technological means in the teaching of Yunnan folk music can help students to understand the characteristics of Yunnan folk music concretely and vividly. Science and technology teaching means are diverse. In music teaching class, teachers can use multimedia technology to let students enjoy

the original local music melodies. In this way, the cultural context contained in Yunnan piano music can be presented, and the relatively abstract content can become intuitive, and students can better understand and remember the classroom learning content in this way. For example, when the teacher explains the Torch of the Torch Festival, he can show the scene depicted in the work to the students by playing the network video, so that the students can have a deeper understanding of the main content of the work and grasp the thoughts and emotions depicted in the process of watching. In addition, teachers can use the Internet to fully expand music teaching methods to enrich music classroom teaching.

Adjust curriculum standards and reform curriculum structure

Most piano majors in colleges and universities enter professional music colleges from the stage of amateur piano learning. Their basic piano training and music theory learning are mostly carried out around the western piano practice courses and piano theory system. Therefore, when interpreting Yunnan folk piano music, they cannot grasp the style characteristics of this type of works. Therefore, music colleges should start from adjusting curriculum teaching standards, attach importance to the status of Chinese folk music works in piano teaching, and explain the performance of ethnic piano works to students in detail. Only in this way can the problems existing in Yunnan folk piano music teaching be solved (Zhao, 2020).

After more than 300 years of development, Western piano art has built a complete piano teaching system, and western composers have also created countless piano works. However, the teaching of Yunnan ethnic piano works is a way for students to know and understand Yunnan ethnic music culture. The ultimate teaching aim should be to protect and inherit the national music culture. Teachers can classify the existing Yunnan national piano works according to the creation type, painting scene, work type, expression technique and so on. By introducing different works to students, students can have a deep understanding of the artistic value and cultural connotation of music while learning and playing these works, as well as the aesthetic characteristics of people in different regions and different nationalities to music. In addition, students should fully understand the background of Yunnan music culture while learning the performance of Yunnan folk song piano works. Teachers should also find out a set of theoretical teaching methods of Yunnan folk song piano works in the teaching, which has a vital role in promoting the teaching of Yunnan folk song piano works in colleges and universities.

Conclusion

The teaching of Yunnan national piano works should not only express the performance skills, musical language and thoughts and feelings of the works by playing a certain piece of music, but also truly penetrate into the piano teaching system, which requires players to stand at a macro level. Through establishing the correct teaching idea, adjusting the curriculum standard, reforming the curriculum structure, strengthening the benign guidance of social activities and other effective measures, the vigorous development of Yunnan national piano works in music teaching practice is constantly promoted.

References

- Bian, M. (1996). *The Formation and Development of Chinese Piano Culture*. Huayue Publishing House.
- Huang, J. (2019). *Research on Music Expressive Force in Piano Teaching Sound*. Huang He Zhi Sheng.
- Li, G. (2004). *Introduction to Structural Analysis of Chinese Music*. Central Conservatory of Music Press.
- Liu, J. (2020). On the importance of effective practice in piano performance. *Voice of the Yellow River*, 2020(3), 46-48.
- Rao, Y. (2002). It is important to explore innovation -- A Brief analysis of Zhu Jianer's piano Creation. *Piano Art*, 2002(1), 69-71.
- Shi, M. (2019). Research on Folk music education and Folk dance teaching practice. *Chinese Journal of Multimedia and Network Teaching*, 2019(5), 78-80.
- Wang, X. (2019). The importance of piano playing technique to Music performance. *Art Research*, 2019(2), 101-103.
- Wang, X. (2020). College Music Education from the perspective of ethnic music culture Inheritance. *Music of the North*, 2020(6), 190-192.
- Wang, Y. (2023). Research on College Music Education Model from the perspective of National Culture Inheritance. *Education Forum*, 2023(3), 36-39.
- Zhao, W. (2020). Analysis of aesthetic characteristics of Yunnan Folk Music. *Northern Music*, 2020(3), 67-69.