



Research on Piano Performance and Emotional Expression

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the relationship and importance of piano performance and emotional expression in art examinations. Through a literature review and empirical analysis, it has been found that piano performance not only requires the performer to possess solid foundational skills but also necessitates a strong ability to express emotions during art examinations. Exceptional pianists can convey emotions through their music, create artistic imagery, and distinguish themselves in art assessments. However, the pressure and challenges associated with these examinations may hinder the performer's emotional expression. Therefore, it is recommended that candidates for art examinations focus on psychological adjustment, accumulate stage experience, and engage in in-depth study of musical works to enhance their emotional expression skills. This study aims to provide valuable references and insights for art examination candidates, assisting them in achieving better outcomes in their assessments.

Keywords

Piano performance; emotional expression; research

1. Introduction

Art exam, also known as art college entrance exam, refers to the entrance exam for art majors in China's higher education enrollment. Unlike the general college entrance exam, the art exam not only examines students' academic performance but also focuses on evaluating their professional skills and potential in art. The art exam aims to select students with artistic talent and professional skills for art colleges and cultivate professional talents for my country's art education and cultural industries. Art exams are mainly divided into two categories: provincial unified exams and professional exams.

- 1) Provincial unified exams: unified art exams organized by provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities, mainly to examine candidates' basic art skills and knowledge. Provincial unified exam results are one of the important bases for candidates to apply for art colleges.
- 2) Professional exams: Professional exams organized by art professional colleges to further evaluate candidates' professional skills and artistic potential. Professional exam results are crucial for candidates applying for the art school.

Piano, as a treasure in music art, has always attracted countless music lovers with its unique charm. For art examination candidates, the piano is not only a musical instrument but also an important carrier of their emotional expression and artistic pursuit. Therefore, how to fully show emotional expression in piano performance has become an important issue facing art examination candidates. This paper will explore the relationship between piano performance and emotional expression from the perspective of art examination, in order to provide some useful references and inspiration for art examination candidates.

2. Basic concepts of piano performance and emotional expression

2.1 Piano performance

Piano playing is a complex and delicate art form that requires the performer to play the piano by hitting the keys with his fingers according to a certain score and rhythm to produce sound. Piano music is a beautiful and lively musical art. Its melody can be gentle, passionate, or lyrical, giving people a pleasant listening experience. It can also relax the body and mind. When people are tired and anxious, the soothing rhythm can bring tranquility. Moreover, it is an emotional bridge that can resonate with people in joy or sorrow, stimulate their inner emotions, and achieve emotional communication (Du, 2023). To become an excellent pianist, in addition to having solid basic skills, one also needs to have a deep understanding and perception of musical works. In piano playing, basic skills are the foundation, including correct hand shape, fingering, and sense of rhythm. The cultivation of these basic skills requires long-term hard practice and continuous training. Through repeated practice, performers can gradually master the correct playing skills and methods, laying a solid foundation for subsequent artistic performance. In addition to basic skills, understanding and perception of musical works are also crucial. Every piece of music contains rich emotions and artistic conception. Performers need to dig deep into the emotional connotation and artistic value behind the work through careful research and analysis. Only by truly understanding the music can the emotions in it be conveyed to the audience or listeners through performance. Piano performance also needs to focus on expressiveness and appeal. An excellent pianist should be able to infect the audience through his performance and immerse them in the world of music. This requires the performer to have a keen musical perception and good emotional expression ability. By using various playing techniques and methods, such as strong and weak contrast, timbre changes, etc., the performer can express the emotions in the music work vividly. In the art examination, piano performance is a very important assessment item. The judges usually make a comprehensive evaluation based on the performer's basic skills, music understanding, expressiveness, and appeal. Therefore, art candidates need to comprehensively improve their piano performance level during the preparation process and strive to reach a high level in all aspects.

2.2 Emotional expression

Emotion plays a core role in music. Music is a language of emotion that can directly touch people's hearts. In piano performance, emotional expression is the soul and communication channel of piano performance. The performer needs to organically integrate music and emotion to achieve good results and resonate with the audience so that they can feel the charm of music together. Strategies should be used to integrate music and emotion to achieve the best performance effect (Cui, 2016). Different musical works often contain different emotions, such as joy, sadness, tranquility, passion, etc. By playing these works, the performer can convey the emotions in them to the audience and let them feel the emotions expressed by the music. In piano performance, emotional expression requires the performer to have profound artistic accomplishment and keen emotional perception. Artistic accomplishment refers to the performer's understanding and pursuit of art, which determines the performer's aesthetic standards and artistic realm for musical works. And keen emotional perception means that the performer can accurately capture and express the emotional details in the musical works. In order to better express emotions, the performer needs to learn to control his emotions and breathing. Emotional fluctuations may affect the performer's performance state, thereby affecting the expression of emotions. Therefore, the performer needs to learn to adjust his emotions and stay calm and focused. At the same time, breathing is also one of the important factors in controlling emotional expression. By adjusting the rhythm and depth of breathing, performers can better control their emotional state and thus better express the emotions in the music. In art exams, judges usually pay special attention to the performers' ability to express emotions. They believe that an excellent pianist should be able to express the emotions in the music vividly through his or her performance, allowing the audience to feel a strong emotional resonance. Therefore, art exam candidates need to strengthen the training and practice of emotional expression during the preparation process and strive to improve their ability to express emotions.

3. The importance of emotional expression in piano performance

3.1 Improving the appeal of music

Musical appeal refers to the ability of a musical work to arouse strong emotional resonance in the audience. From the perspective of piano performance and teaching, the internal relationship between technology and music is complex and diverse. It is not only reflected in piano performance skill training such as key touch skills, but also appears in some non-musical fields and has a weak connection with music (Ma, 2023). Therefore, in piano performance, improving musical appeal is crucial because it allows the audience to experience and feel the emotions and artistic conception conveyed by

the musical work more deeply. To improve musical appeal, performers need to pay attention to the selection and understanding of musical works. Different musical works have different emotions and styles. Performers need to choose works that suit them according to their own characteristics and preferences. At the same time, performers also need to study and analyze musical works in depth, and understand their background, history, and cultural connotations, so as to better grasp the emotions and artistic conception of the works. In addition to the selection and understanding of musical works, performers also need to pay attention to their own performance skills and expression ability. Good performance skills are the foundation, that enables performers to express their emotions and artistic conception in musical works more freely. Strong expression ability is the key, which enables performers to convey their emotions and understanding to the audience through performance, thereby generating resonance. In the process of improving the appeal of music, performers also need to pay attention to interaction and communication with the audience. Music is an art of communication, and performers need to establish connections and communication with the audience through performance. By observing the audience's reactions and emotional changes, performers can adjust their performance style and expression intensity in time to better meet the audience's needs and expectations.

3.2 Shaping artistic image

Artistic image refers to an image with unique beauty and connotation created by artistic means. In piano performance, shaping an artistic image is crucial because it can make the music more vivid and lively, and it can also show the personality and style of the performer. To shape an artistic image, the performer needs to pay attention to the emotional expression of the music. Different music works have different emotions and artistic conceptions. The performer needs to present the artistic image to the audience, through delicate emotional expression, to realize the best interpretation of the artistic image that the original artwork hopes to achieve. This includes the grasp of the emotional ups and downs in the work and the control of the timbre changes. In addition to emotional expression, the performer also needs to pay attention to the structure and form of the music work. A complete music work should have a clear structure and form, which helps to shape its artistic image. The performer needs to grasp its structure and form through in-depth analysis and understanding of the work, so as to better present the overall effect of the work. In the process of shaping the artistic image, the performer also needs to pay attention to innovative and personalized expression, for each performer has his own characteristics and style. Through innovative and personalized expression, the performer can create his or her own artistic image to stand out from many other performers.

3.3 Show personal talent

In art exams, piano performance is a very important assessment item. By showing personal talent, performers can demonstrate their musical literacy, artistic accomplishment, and performance skills to the judges and the audience. Piano performance is an aesthetic process. Music allows people to gain images through hearing and then expand their scope and communicate with their hearts. Understanding perception, emotional experience, artistic conception, and emotional expression are all important for piano performance (Zuo, 2010). This is not only an affirmation of the performers' personal abilities, but also an expectation for their future development. To show their personal talents, performers need to focus on their basic skills and skill levels. Basic skills are the foundation of performance, including correct hand shape, fingering, rhythm, etc. The skill level refers to the performer's ability to control the musical work, including the understanding, expression, and innovation of the work. Only with solid basic skills and high-level skills can performers perform well and fully demonstrate their talent in the art assessments. In addition to basic skills and skill levels, performers also need to pay attention to their musical literacy and artistic accomplishment. Musical literacy refers to the performer's ability to recognize and understand music, which determines the performer's aesthetic standards and artistic realm for musical works. Artistic accomplishment refers to the performer's pursuit and cultivation of art, which determines the performer's artistic temperament and performance ability. Only with a high level of musical literacy and artistic accomplishment can performers show their talents and potential in the art examinations. In the process of showing personal talents, performers also need to pay attention to their self-confidence and expression ability. Self-confidence refers to the performer's trust and affirmation of his or her own abilities, which enables the performer to express his or her emotions and ideas more freely during the performance. The expressive ability refers to the performer's ability to convey his or her inner world to the audience through musical works, which determines the emotional communication and resonance between the performer and the audience. Only with self-confidence and good expression ability can performers fully demonstrate their talents and potential in the art examinations. In summary, enhancing the appeal of music, shaping artistic images, and showing personal talents are very important aspects of piano performance. Through continuous efforts and practice, art candidates can achieve excellent results in art examinations and realize their musical dreams.

4. Challenges and coping strategies of piano performance and emotional expression in art exams

4.1 Challenges

In art examinations, pianists need to face dual pressures from judges and audiences. This pressure may affect their performance and cause emotional expression to be less natural and fluent. Judges usually make a comprehensive evaluation of the performers' skills, emotional expression, and artistic accomplishment, and the audience's expectations and reactions may also have a certain impact on the performers. In addition to the pressure from judges and audiences, performers also need to face their own challenges. Due to the different personalities and experiences of each performer, they may have differences and deficiencies in expressing emotions. Some performers may be too nervous or lack confidence, which prevents them from fully expressing their emotions when playing. Some performers may rely too much on music scores or techniques and ignore the emotional connotation and artistic value of musical works. In order to overcome these challenges, art candidates need to adopt a series of effective coping strategies. First of all, they should strengthen psychological adjustment training to improve their self-confidence and ability to resist pressure. Through psychological adjustment training, performers can learn to adjust their mentality and emotions and reduce the impact of tension and anxiety. They can try some relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing, yoga, or meditation, to relieve stress and anxiety. Secondly, art candidates should participate in more mock exams and performance practices to accumulate stage experience and performance skills. Mock exams and performance practices can make performers familiar with the examination environment and process, and improve their performance ability and ability to deal with emergencies. Through continuous practice, performers can gradually overcome stage tension and fear, and better show their talents and emotions. Finally, art candidates should also focus on in-depth research and understanding of musical works. Through in-depth study and understanding of musical works, they can better grasp the emotions and artistic conception of the works, and thus better express the emotions and artistic values that the works want to convey. They can better grasp the emotions and artistic conception of the works by studying and understanding them, and thus better express the emotions and artistic values that the works want to convey. They can gain a deeper understanding of musical works by analyzing music scores, listening to recordings, watching performances, etc., and exploring the emotional connotations and artistic values behind them.

4.2 Coping strategies

In response to the above challenges, art candidates can adopt the following coping strategies:

4.2.1 Psychological adjustment training

Psychological adjustment training: In piano playing, one must highlight one's own characteristics. The performer must immerse himself in the music and feel the emotions in it. As the music keeps changing, the performer can use playing techniques to delicately express the emotions contained in piano art, making the performance full of soul (Liu, 2021). Therefore, art exam candidates can improve their self-confidence and stress resistance through psychological adjustment training. This includes techniques such as cognitive behavioral therapy and mindfulness meditation, which help them identify and adjust negative thinking patterns, and cultivate a positive mindset and the ability to cope with stress. In addition, establishing reasonable goals and expectations is also an important strategy to reduce stress.

4.2.2 Mock exams and performance practice

Through mock exams and performance practice, art candidates can gradually adapt to the examination environment and atmosphere, and improve their performance ability and ability to cope with emergencies. In mock exams, they can simulate real exam conditions, such as time limits, scoring criteria, etc., to improve their test-taking skills. And in performance practice, they can exercise their stage performance and ability to interact with the audience.

4.2.3 In-depth study and understanding of music works

Art candidates should study and understand the background, history, and cultural connotations of music works in order to better grasp the emotions and artistic conception of the works. They can read relevant music literature, listen to recordings of famous artists, watch performance videos, etc. to get more inspiration and enlightenment. By studying and understanding music works in depth, art candidates can better express the emotions and artistic values that the works want to convey. In summary, art candidates face many challenges in art exams, but as long as they adopt effective coping strategies, they can overcome these challenges and achieve excellent results. Through strategies such as psychological adjustment training, mock exams, and performance practice, as well as in-depth study and understanding of music works, art candidates can improve their psychological quality, performance ability, and musical literacy quickly and effectively, and

lay a solid foundation for their future artistic career.

5. Conclusion

In summary, emotional expression is crucial in piano performance. It is like the soul of performance and is directly related to the performer's various performances. Only by paying full attention to and using emotions can piano performance be more artistically attractive (Ni, 2014). Piano performance and emotional expression are not only important indicators for evaluating the comprehensive quality of art candidates but also an important stage for art candidates to show their talents and artistic pursuits. Only by fully understanding and mastering the relationship and skills between piano performance and emotional expression can one achieve excellent results in art examinations and lay a solid foundation for future artistic careers. In art examinations, the importance of piano performance and emotional expression is self-evident. They are not only important means for art candidates to show their musical talents, but also a bridge to establish emotional connections with judges and audiences. Through superb performance skills and sincere emotional expression, art candidates can impress judges and audiences and win their recognition and praise. However, to achieve excellent results in art examinations, art candidates still need to overcome many challenges and difficulties. For example, they need to face pressure from judges and audiences, as well as their own shortcomings in technology and emotional expression. Therefore, art candidates need to put in a lot of effort and time to improve their performance level and emotional expression ability through continuous practice and learning. In addition, art students also need to focus on cultivating their own musical literacy and artistic accomplishment. Through extensive music knowledge learning and artistic edification, they can broaden their horizons and ideas, and better understand and express musical works. At the same time, they also need to learn how to cooperate and communicate with others, and improve their teamwork and communication skills. I believe that in future learning and practice, art students will continue to improve their performance level and emotional expression ability and achieve more fruitful results. They will go further and further on the road of art and make greater contributions to the development of the music industry.

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