

## **A Study on the Values and Teaching Key points of Programmatic Piano Pieces of the Romantic Period in Normal University**

Xu Shuangshuang<sup>1</sup>, Xie Yanyang<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The music education department of Sichuan Conservatory Of Music, Chengdu, China

<sup>2</sup>The Education and Science Institute of Sichuan Normal University, Chengdu, China

### **Abstract**

The instrumental music piece is a feature of music development during the Romantic Period, programmatic piano pieces occupied rather important place. Programmatic piano piece which contains headline and origins from tales, fictions, and paintings has the characteristics of short and concise. This paper will analyse and study the concept and evolution of programmatic piano piece during the Romantic Period, which mainly focuses on the values and the teaching key points in normal university. This paper aims to provide help for the professionals in this field.

**Keywords:** The Romantic Period, Programmatic Piano Piece, Teaching Value, Key Point.

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, European romantic literature sprang up. Until the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century, some romantic composers appeared, such as Liszt Ferenc, Robert Schumann and so on. During that period, Romantic works placed emphasis on expression of feelings, which refracted purely subjective personal emotions. Meanwhile, programmatic piano piece developed as the major achievement of that period, and had great influence. For the study of programmatic piano piece, the domestic studies chiefly pay attention to piano pieces of a certain composer, summarize the features of these pieces and then generalize the classification of techniques, skills, and playing of the works. This paper mainly studies the values and the teaching key points of the programmatic piano piece in the Romantic Period in the normal university.

### **SUMMARY OF THE CONCEPT OF THE PROGRAMMATIC PIANO PIECE IN THE ROMANTIC PERIOD.**

The Romantic Period started from 1790 to 1910 in western music. It's a relatively ambiguous concept, which origins from the literature thoughts of French revolution from the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During the time of French revolution, the thoughts of freedom and fairness spread, which greatly push the individual liberation and personal feelings expression. At that time, the core thoughts of the romantic literature were focusing on the individual individualism and freedom.

Programmatic music is to use the instruments and express emotions to guide the audiences to focus on the works. Characteristics of Piano piece are short and concise. Till now, it has not developed as a universal concept. It firstly appeared in the time of Baroque. More precisely, programmatic piano piece emerged from the ancient piano music in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and then thrived in 19<sup>th</sup> century during the Romantic Period. The main reasons are the social environment providing the source of creativity, the development of productivity providing the power, and fusion of literature and art providing the direction and the catalyzing of the thoughts of romantic aesthetics and philosophy. There were some representative works in that time, such as *Moment music* and *Moments Musicaux* of Schubert, *Butterfly* and *Carnival* of Robert Schumann, *songs without words* of Mendelssohn, *The gost of saintly person* and *traveler* of Liszt and so on, above all are the masterpieces in of the Romantic period. The programmatic piano pieces of the Romantic Period could be distinguished into the specific titles and generic titles. Generic titles mainly stand for nocturne and cradlesong. Specific titles contains more descriptive contents. During that period, the artistic characteristics of programmatic piano

piece presented unique ideas, simple structures, and correspondence of themes and images.

### **THE TEACHING VALUES OF THE PROGRAMMATIC PIANO PIECES OF ROMANTIC PERIOD IN THE NORMAL UNIVERSITY.**

Compared with the music works of others in the same time, the programmatic piano pieces in the romantic period are more valuable regarding to the aspects of appreciation, creation and piano-teaching. From the piano-teaching value, art teaching itself is some certain creative consciousness. Each piece of piano music owns its unique style and features. As for the using of piano, it can reflect different teaching values. As for the students' ability, the normal university students are different from students of professional piano playing department. Students in the normal university are taught with more general and practical piano works rather than the profound works. Therefore, the piano pieces with titles are more suitable for the students in the normal university who learn piano.

#### ***Improving the comprehension of the students in the normal university to the music..***

The teaching of programmatic piano piece of romantic period can contribute to the comprehension to the music style and it can give a deep impression for the students. The programmatic piano piece of the romantic period is the most representative work in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which can reflect the real creative style and features of music and unique images, genres, emotional styles, and expression contents can be clearly reflected. The melodies of the programmatic piano piece are fluent and lyric, with free harmony and rich chords, which have no limitation in modulation, and sufficiently absorb the essence of folk-dance, which are conducive to improving the normal university students to grasp the creative styles of the programmatic piano piece in the Romantic Period.

In the history of piano art, the Romantic Period was very crucial because there were many pieces of typical piano works. The effect of teaching the programmatic piano pieces is profound. During the teaching progress, this kind of works has advantages because most of the works are short and concise. Therefore, it may take short teaching time, and reduce the time for both teachers and students in composition recitation as well, which are able to make students understand the creative styles and creative purposes in a short time. The style of programmatic piece is various. Its own advantages can promote the free collocation in teaching and can explain the music style from various aspects. As for the technical difficulties, there is nearly no difficulty in this style music works. Hence, it is suitable for general piano-teaching, and there would not be any technical obstacles in the teaching.

#### ***To teach the programmatic piano pieces of Romantic Period in the normal university can contribute to nurturing the students' ability to play piano.***

During the progress of the creation of programmatic piano pieces in the Romantic Period, there were a number of musicians from different nations who created many musical works with its own national characteristics, which showed strong sense of gradation in performances. Compounding with these features makes the performances of the programmatic pieces seem like songs, which have splendid melodies. Putting the situations into musical teaching can help the students improve their practices of music skills and playing skills.

For every single piano learner, playing technique is the basic skill, which the piano teachers must guide the students to grasp as soon as possible. For the piano learners, the programmatic piano pieces in the Romantic Period was short and concise, such as *To the Spring*, *Dreaming Music*, *why* and so on, which are good for training, i.e., helping the players infuse their emotions into rhythm. During the process of the teaching of musical instruments, music is the best docent, especially for the primary learners. In this circumstance, teachers should not only explain the contents but also should make the students deep influenced. Therefore, the programmatic

piano piece in the Romantic Period could provide rich and changeable emotions, melody and concord., which are all useful for training the students.

**To teach the programmatic piano pieces of Romantic Period in the normal university can contribute to the students' literature and art cultivation.**

The programmatic piano pieces of romantic period have truly poetic titles. The creation of works closely related to the life of the artists. In the study of programmatic piano piece, it is necessary to comprehend the backgrounds and the intentions of the creation. For instance, in the creation of the *Painting Exhibition Room*, it is needed to know the reason of creation and the relationship between the painters and the composer. In the teaching of *Carnival*, it is required to realize the two reflections of *Schumann*, Playing music requires not only smooth performances and skills, but also requires abundant emotions. The advanced previous preparations before the performances are always more significant than practices. In consequence, studying the programmatic piano pieces in the Romantic Period can improve the literature cultivation of the students.

### **THE TEACHING KEY POINTS**

Teaching programmatic piano pieces in the Romantic Period should grasp the right methods so that to help students immerse into the study of music.

In the teaching progress, the teachers should pay more attention to optimized allocation of various programmatic piano pieces. The styles of that time's piano works are diverse. For instance, *Dancing Music* is active, *Nocturne* is distressed and *Military March* is majestic. During the teaching progress, teachers can put the different style pieces of music into one and play it, which is able to activate the students. Or teaching by putting the same style music together can improve students' ability in certain area. For example, *Nocturne* and *Travel Age* can be engaged in teaching for the fickle students. *Waltz* and *Norwegian Dance* can be employed for the intrapersonal students, which is able to propel their sense of rhythm and gradually practice the students' enthusiastic performances. In the teaching, no matter adopting sole collective teaching, or various styles of collocation teaching, it is necessary to be arranged based on every single student's characteristics, and help students lay a foundation for their study.

In the teaching of programmatic piano pieces in the Romantic Period, it demands combine emotional teaching method with rational teaching method. As mentioned above, compared with the works in Classical Period, the works in the Romantic Period own strong emotional colors, which reveal the propositions of the most composers towards music. Therefore, the real meanings of the music cannot be misrepresented. The playing progress itself is the unification of rationality and sensibility. The emotional colors should be grasped by the students themselves and the performed through dynamic and powerful performances to attract the audiences. In addition, the performers are needed to be controlled by ration during the performances not to deviate the intentions of the composer. The combination between ration and emotion is tally reflected from the key contact of fingers, and the change of tone can be expresses by the key contact of fingers.

In the teaching of the programmatic piano pieces in the Romantic Period, it is required to unity the whole tones and the slight emotion changes. Although the programmatic piano piece is short, it does not simply present a single theme. There may be various topics in a single piece of work. For example, there are two themes in the work of *Nocturne*, in the parts of the presentation and representation, it displays peaceful emotion, while, the emotion breaks out in the middle part of this piece, which enables the piece to show a distinct contrast. At the same time, there are also some single them works, such as *Dreaming Music*. Thus, if we want to perform single theme music, the slight changing emotion must be mastered during the performances. If there

are various themes, in the teaching progress, the teachers should show the change of the tone according to the diversified themes.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, in the creation of piano works, the programmatic piano piece is a rather important musical form, which has the features of delicacy and lyricism and plays a significant role in the emotion handling and tone training. This paper explains the values and the main teaching key points of the programmatic piano piece in the Romantic Period, still, it further need to be studied by more experts.

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