Discussion on Expression of Piano Opuses Based on Listeners’ Psychological Laws

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Abstract

A perfect piano performance needs excellent playing competence and outstanding artistic contents. Musical expression is the soul of piano playing. If a player lacks of abundant attainments and solid skills, it will be difficult for him/her to express the emotion of the opuses. As listeners’ aesthetic quality is increasing constantly, the emotional skill of piano playing is important. This paper expounded the definition and functions of musical expression, and discussed the methods for improving musical expression of piano from the perspective of listeners.

Keywords: Listeners, Piano opus, Expression

1. INTRODUCTION

Piano playing interprets the charm of music excellently, and players connect the piano opuses and listeners closely to enable listeners to feel the charm of music. Having certain skills for playing the piano is not sufficient for a piano player to fulfil people’s aesthetic needs. Instead, piano players should be capable of expressing music in order to express the emotions of the opuses excellently. Expression of piano opus is an abstract concept. However, the expression of piano playing reflects a player’s own musical perceptiveness which includes not only playing skills but also the emotions expressed in piano opuses. Listeners are the final audiences of piano playing. Therefore, players should further improve their expressing ability in piano playing from the perspective of listeners, thus moving listeners emotionally.

2. Definition and functions of musical expression

2.1 Definition of musical expression

Musical expression refers to people’s comprehension of the contents of musical composition as well as aesthetic judgment on music. In piano performance, it is the musical infection expressed by the player through piano playing instead of the player’s skills that moves the audiences. As is known to all, piano music is a highly skilled art. Although playing skills are important, we should also realize that playing technique is only an expression means, and musical emotion is the soul of piano playing. In order to sufficiently show the emotions of piano opuses, a player needs to give full play to his/her playing skills and express his/her emotion of the opuses amid performance. To touch listeners, a player has to touch
himself/herself first, so that the player will communicate with listeners mentally, thus sufficiently expressing the expression of the piano opuses.

2.2 The significance of cultivating musical expression
2.2.1 Musical expression reflects players’ competence

Players can show their playing skills and emotions through piano playing, and an excellent piano player should touch listeners emotionally instead of touching listeners through playing skills. In a sense, an excellent player can express the emotion of a piano opus incisively and vividly, and the criteria for evaluating a piano player’s artistic attainments include playing skills and musical expression, with the latter dominating. This shows that piano players should constantly improve their musical expression on the basis of improving playing skills if they want to enhance their artistic attainments in piano.

2.2.2 Musical expression is the soul of music performance

People will feel joyful or sad when enjoying a piano opus. Their feelings originate from musical expression, and piano players manage to form resonance with listeners through playing. When people are touched by a piano opus, people are touched by the emotion expressed by the player amid performance instead of the player’s playing skills. To touch listeners more satisfactorily, players need excellent musical expression which is the soul of musical performance and can arouse mental resonance with listeners to some extent.

3. Expression of aesthetic psychology amid aesthetic activities

When people enjoy an opus, they will be interested if the structural form and style of the opus is consistent with the appreciators’ aesthetic taste. Moreover, they will get aesthetic pleasure and cater to their own aesthetic psychology amid appreciation. However, if an opus always complies with people’s aesthetical standard amid aesthetic activities, people will be not as excited as they are when they appreciate the opus at the very beginning. What’s more, they will even have aesthetic fatigue as times goes by. For instance, when people are familiar with the melody of an opus, they will have higher aesthetic demands for the opus. If the style and feature of the music are consistent with listeners’ previous aesthetical standard, listeners won’t be able to get new aesthetic pleasure, and their aesthetic psychological needs for the opus won’t be fulfilled.

In order to meet listeners’ aesthetic needs and touch listeners better to enable them to feel the charm of piano opuses, players have to improve the expression of piano playing, thus realizing the aesthetic values of music.

4. Mastering the expression of piano opuses by adjusting rhythms

Music rhythm depends on the duration of sound wave vibration. The expression of music rhythm is closely related to people’s pace of life. For instance, the music rhythms for expressing excrement are pressing and nervous, and music rhythms for expressing contemplation and sadness are placid. This expression form which enables listeners to
mentally communicate with music can make piano opuses infectious enough to move listeners.

According to the logical laws of aesthetic psychology, rhythms should be variable and be adjusted properly without affecting music effect amid performance in order to avoid aesthetic fatigue of listeners. In other words, music rhythms should be adjusted in certain ways on the basis of breaking overall speed, beat and pace. When a mood is involved in music, speed and rhythm are closely related to the musical image shaped by the player. If a player cannot accurately master the space and rhythm, he/she won’t be able to express the artistic thought of the opus. On the contrary, if a player can accurately master the space and rhythm, he/she will be able to express the emotion of the opus by using his playing skills.

5. Important approaches to improve expression of piano opuses

5.1 Mastering the artistic conception of piano opuses
5.1.1 Studying the music scores carefully

Music score which includes notes, rhythms and other important clefs is the outline and foundation for players to play opuses. Therefore, players should comprehend music scores sufficiently, and they will be able to play piano opuses more excellently on the basis of sufficient comprehension of the music scores.

5.1.2 Comprehending the opuses sufficiently

As a musical composition reflects the composer’s emotion, piano players should master the emotional keynote of the opus, and they will play the vital and infectious piano opuses on the basis of sufficient comprehension of the opuses. Therefore, in order to express the emotion of a piano opus, the first thing that players need to do is to master its emotion and understand its style, thus giving full play to the expression of piano composition.

5.1.3 Playing opuses completely as a whole

The playing competence of a piano player is evaluated from an overall perspective of the opus instead of playing skills only. Moreover, an emphasis is laid on the player’s overall mastery of the musical composition. Therefore, players shouldn’t ignore the details of an opus; instead, they ought to master an opus as a whole, learn its emotional keynote, and pay attention to the emotional connection between periods, thus mastering a musical composition as a whole.

5.2 Acute audition and inner singing

5.2.1 Cultivating acute audition

Acute audition and affluent inner singing are the basic competence of an excellent player. To cultivate audition ability, players should firstly learn to listen to their own tweedle and analyze whether their tweedle complies with the needs of musical composition. By learning to listen to his/her own tweedle, a player will be able to find out their playing problems. Therefore, piano players should learn to listen to their tweedle, and pay attention to the melody trend, mode, tonality and harmony of the opuses.

Playing sound can reflect a player’s playing competence. Hence, piano players ought to listen to the “tone quality” of their playing, and feel which sound complies with the opus and
which sound damages its artistic conception. Players can cultivate their auditory capability and correct their playing sound by practicing in this way.

5.2.2 Cultivating inner singing

When a player feels a musical composition wholeheartedly, he/she will be able to express its vitality and infection, and even pursue exquisite tone amid piano playing. To cultivate inner singing which is the premise for playing the piano, players can choose some opuses which they are familiar with to cultivate their inner singing at the beginning. They may cultivate inner singing gradually either by singing while playing or singing before playing.

6. Conclusion

Expression of piano playing reflects a player’s comprehensive competence. Expression of piano opuses includes both playing skills and the emotions expressed by opuses. To reflect the expression of piano opuses better, players not only need to accurately play the rhythm, melody, chord and other techniques, but also sufficiently learn the cultural connotation and background of the opuses, thus trying to keep their playing thought consistent with the composer’s thought. In addition, whether a piano composition can touch listeners is closely related to the player’s cultural connotation attainments as well as his/her capability in feeling life experience.

References


