

A Brief Analysis of Schubert's Art Song in Piano Sonata D.537 in A Minor

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ABSTRACT

Franz Schubert (1797-1828), Austrian composer, representative of early Romantic music, is also regarded as the last master of classical music. His creative career was not long, but he left a lot of musical wealth to future generations. He composed more than 600 art songs in his lifetime and is known as the "King of Art Songs" in the history of Western music. He wrote a large number of vocal works for the poems of German poets such as Goethe, Heine, Schiller, etc. His art songs achieve the perfect combination of poetry and music, and the connotation of poetry and the image of the characters in the poem are vividly displayed through Schubert's music. At the same time, Schubert was also quite successful in instrumental music, and his creative genres were extremely wide, including chamber music, symphonies, piano sonatas, piano improvisations, etc. His musical composition has already revealed the characteristics of early Romantic music, laying the foundation for the full arrival of music in the later Romantic period. This paper takes D.537 in Schubert's "Piano Sonata in A minor" to explore the relationship and difference between Schubert's art song writing thinking and the influence of Schubert's art song writing thinking on his piano sonata composition.

KEYWORDS

Schubert; Thinking of art songs; Piano sonata in A minor D.537; Piano sonata

The Piano Sonata D.537 in a minor, composed in 1817, is one of Schubert's earliest piano sonatas. This smaller sonata, composed of three movements with different emotions, is written in the traditional technique of the classical period sonatas, and at the same time combines the unique lyrical style of Schubert's art song. This paper will take Schubert's Piano Sonata D.537 in a minor as an example to analyze the unique characteristics of his instrumental works with obvious art song writing thinking, explore Schubert's art song writing thinking method by combing and listing many factors affecting his art song creation, and compare it with his piano sonata creation technique. To study the relationship between them in creation. Art song is a kind of vocal music with the nature of chamber music in western music, and is a general term for lyric songs popular in Europe from the end of the 18th century to the beginning of the 19th century. Art songs are also known by different names in different countries: Melodie in France, Lied in Germany, Romance in Russia, and Arie Antiche (Italian classical songs) in Italy. Although the name and style are different, they all belong to the category of art songs in terms of genre attributes. In this paper, the author locks the type of art songs in the German Liede for exploration. Liede's lyrics come from high-quality literary works, which can be divided into "segmented songs" or "music songs" in the treatment of musical structure. According to the lyricism or dramatic needs of the poetic content, the music of each lyric is the same or different, but whether it is simple or delicate, Liede's piano accompaniment needs artistic interpretation.

1 Art Song Genre and Creative Thinking

(1) Interpretation of Artistic Song Creation Thinking. Artistic song creation thinking refers to a kind of thinking mode that musicians use literary poetry and emotion to create music and express their own music style. That is, poetry and music are integrated to express the emotions and artistic conception in poetry through music. This style of creation first appeared in Germany in the 19th century and was mainly promoted and developed by Schubert and his successors. In art songs, music and poetry are regarded as equal elements, and together they constitute a holistic form of artistic expression. The creation and interpretation of art songs require musicians to have a deep understanding and feeling of the artistic conception and emotion of poetry, and also need to have exquisite skills and rich musical expression.

(2) Schubert's Artistic Song Creation Thinking. The creative thinking of art songs has a special position in Schubert's overall music creation, especially in the creation of his piano works. Schubert combines the unique techniques of singing melody, changing tonality and poetical structure in art songs to express complex content and specific images, thus forming the unique characteristics of Schubert's instrumental works. Schubert's art songs are the most important part of his music creation, and he has created more than 600 songs in his life, known as the "king of art songs". Although Schubert did not invent the art song genre, there is no doubt that he took it to a whole new level. Schubert's uniqueness in the creation of art songs is that he not only elevated the elements of poetry from the edge to the core of the song, but also integrated poetry and music in a unique and inevitable way, thus opening up a new world for the creation of German and Austrian art songs. Schubert's art songs combine the traditions of the Viennese school of classical music and folk music without any confusion. At the same time, he enriched the drama in art songs, some of which can even be

compared with opera from a dramatic point of view. Schubert combined his ill-fated, lonely inner world with a vagabond optimism into his unique art song.^[1]

2 Factors Affecting Schubert's Artistic Song Creation Thinking

(1)The Influence of German and Austrian Poetry on Schubert's Art Song Selection. The lyrics of Schubert's art songs are mainly based on the poems of the romantic poets of the 19th century. Poetry is the oldest and most basic literary form in the world, and it is a literary genre that expounds the soul. The poetry of German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) had the greatest influence on Schubert, and of his more than 600 works of art song, 91 were composed in Goethe's poetry. The expression of delicate emotion in Goethe's poems, whether it is the worship of love or the description of the beauty of nature, has a strong impact on Schubert's heart. *Rastlose Liebe* (D. 138), for example, is Schubert's delicate depiction of love; In *The Wild Rose* ([German] *Heidenroslein*, D.257), the wild rose symbolizes a weak figure who struggles with fate but ultimately loses his life by being harvested. The plots in these poems resonate with Schubert's inner feelings.

The Return of the Native by Heinrich Heine (1797-1856), a German lyricist and essayist, is a collection of lyrical poems written after two failed love affairs, mainly expressing the frustration of love and the loneliness caused by the difficulty of integrating into the society because of his Jewish origin. Schubert set six of Heine's poems to music, from Heine's "Die Heimkehr" (" Die Heimkehr ") in "Buch der Lieder" (" De "). Written a few months before Schubert's death, the composer looks back on his life, his loneliness and frustration, and hopes for a bright future all written in these six songs.

(2)The Influence of German Pronunciation on the Melody Writing of Schubert's Art Songs. Most of Schubert's art songs are composed in his native German, so the pronunciation rules and methods of German and the laws of language are important factors affecting the creation of his art songs. In Schubert's vocal works, the laryngeal, dental and phonics principles of German pronunciation can easily destroy the coherence of melody in the vocal works. When Schubert created art songs, in order to avoid destroying the coherence of the melody, he divided some German words that were easy to destroy the melody through different melody trends, so as to maintain the smooth melody and fully reflect the phonetic characteristics of German cadence.

(3)The Influence of Poetic Style on the Writing Structure of Schubert's Art Songs. As a norm in literature, the Verse is usually used in the Fixed Verse, that is, the poem structure with the same length, rhyme and line. Verse, as a song form, refers to the singing of two or more lyrics with the same tune in more than one song, which is characterized by roughly the same number of words and rhythm. For example, "The Wild Rose" uses the lyrics of Goethe's poem of the same name, the poem has three paragraphs, each of which is a regular 16 bars, the length of the poem, the rhyme and the division of the paragraph are the same, Schubert set three different lyrics to the same tune. The structure of the variation verse is the same as that of the variation verse, but when repeating the same tune, slight changes are made in the tone and rhythm of the tune.

Tongpai songs are usually used in relatively free poetic genres, such as lyrics and narrative poems. This genre has no specific requirements for the number and length of lines in the poem, and focuses on the development of the story in the poem. From the point of view of song form, the song is the structure corresponding to the segmented song, the difference is that the lyrics of the segmented song change between each paragraph, and the melody usually stays the same, or changes little. "The Devil King" is a very representative art song with a song structure. The lyrics adopt Goethe's narrative poem, and the story structure is composed of five parts: "prologue - beginning - development - climax - ending".

3 The Expression of Artistic Song Creation Thinking in Schubert's Piano Sonata in A minor D.537

The Piano Sonata D.537 in a minor, composed in 1817, is one of Schubert's early piano sonatas. The third movement of this work returns to the same key as the first, a minor, and is considered his first complete piano sonata work. During this period, Schubert experienced many changes in life, his father remarried and lost his job, which made his mood grow to a certain extent. Therefore, Schubert's music creation in this period was also in the stage of exploration and gradual maturity.^[2]

(1)Structural Thinking. In his early career, Schubert produced a high volume of works, especially art songs, and by 1815 he had completed 145 art songs. The influence of thinking mode brought about by such intensive art song creation can already be seen in his piano sonata creation of the same period. In the structure of musical form, Schubert was influenced by the structure of verse and harmonic song in art songs.

A. The Influence of Verse

The second movement is the one most influenced by the structure of the segmented song. The second movement is in the form of A cyclotron, with the structure A-B-A1-C-A. Part A of this movement is an unreproduced two-segment form,

composed of two parallel phrases (4+4), with a regular syntactic structure, each four bars in one unit, in which Schubert uses the same number of bars and the same thoughts, and the same texture in the left hand voice. The direction arrangement of the melody line is similar to the vocal melody in art songs. The breathing point of the phrase is not in accordance with the regular law of the strength of the 2/4 beat, but elongates the downbeat tone with homophonic connection, and writes ">" in each weak note in the second phrase to emphasize the high note. Schubert makes the melody of instrumental music with the characteristics of vocal music. In a two-part verse, there is a "verse" and a "chorus", and the chorus is usually the same lyrics and melody and needs to be repeated. This section also uses the same writing method, and such a structure is consistent with his segmented song structure thinking in art songs.^[3]

B. The Influence of Tongpu Song

The form structure of the first movement is the traditional sonata form, which is less affected by the form structure of the general score song, but the irregularity of the phrase is still greatly affected. The third movement is the most influenced by the structure of the song in the whole work, which not only reflects the irregularity of the phrase, but also breaks through the traditional layout of the structure of the roundabout form. In the first movement, most of the phrases are unstructured, and the exposition and development parts are often composed of irregular phrases such as 3+2, 4+7, 4+10, etc. This division of phrases is similar to the division of phrases in art songs. Schubert arranges the melody lines of instrumental works according to different melody lines in general music songs, with narrative character.

(2) Melodic Thinking. In the piano sonatas of this period, Schubert's melodic writing was mostly inspired by his art songs. In these piano sonatas, there are both lyric melodies similar to vocal music and melodies similar to piano accompaniment in art songs, and his melody creation thinking switches between vocal music and instrumental music. This period of intensive art song creation, so that Schubert in the creation of instrumental music melodic techniques also deeply influenced. Schubert's piano melodies were influenced by the literary nature of German and Austrian poetry and the pronunciation characteristics of German in his art songs. Therefore, in the melodies of his piano sonatas, he demonstrated his poetic feelings similar to those in art songs through moderate speed, short sentence length, smooth sentence fluctuation and relatively close interval relationship.^[4]

4 Conclusion

Firstly, through the exploration of Schubert's art song thinking and the musical analysis of Schubert's Piano Sonata D.537 in a minor, it can be seen that the structure and melody of Schubert's piano sonata were influenced by his art song creation. In particular, the second movement is greatly influenced by the creative thinking of art songs. The melody writing, the breath of the phrase and the texture of the low voice can all be found in the microcosm of Schubert's art songs. Therefore, it is not difficult to see that Schubert's creative methods in the creation of this piano sonata and his art songs are mutually beneficial. Exploring the thinking of Schubert's art songs is not only for the performance of "a minor Piano Sonata D.537", but also for the study of other types of Schubert's instrumental music, through this way of thinking to interpret his music works more systematically, to understand the uniqueness of his instrumental music.^[5]

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