

Reflection on the Application of Ethnic Piano Music in Piano Teaching in Colleges and Universities

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the current situation and problems in the teaching of national piano music in the professional piano teaching of Chinese colleges and universities, and expounds the significance of national piano music in the teaching of piano major in colleges and universities. Aiming at strengthening the application of national piano music in piano teaching, the authors put forward suggestions from the perspectives such as curriculum setting, teaching reform, improving the teaching system, the construction of the teaching team, etc.

Keywords: *ethnic piano music, college piano, teaching, application*

I. INTRODUCTION

In music teaching in colleges and universities in China, piano teaching is an important part of music teaching, whether it is music major in comprehensive colleges or professional music colleges. With the advancement of curriculum reform policy and the development of the times, piano teaching has entered an important stage of teaching reform. Ethnic piano music combines the cultural connotation of Chinese ethnic music with the mature and perfect theory and technology of western piano music, which can add new teaching contents to the piano teaching in colleges and universities, enhance the spread of traditional ethnic music culture and promote the penetration of traditional culture in education and teaching. Therefore, piano teaching in colleges and universities should combine with the important ideas of current teaching reform, attach importance to the unique teaching value of ethnic piano music, and integrate ethnic piano music into professional teaching with appropriate teaching methods.

II. THE APPLICATION OF ETHNIC PIANO MUSIC IN THE TEACHING OF PROFESSIONAL PIANO IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN CHINA

A. *Insufficient attention is paid to ethnic piano music*

At present, western piano music is the main teaching content of piano courses in most universities in China, and few teachers choose ethnic piano music [1]. Since the piano is a musical instrument introduced from the west, many piano teachers define the piano music as

the western musical culture, excluding the ethnic piano music from the mainstream piano teaching. It imparts a narrow idea to the students, which makes many students put the ethnic piano music and the western piano music on opposite sides.

B. *The lack of representative works of ethnic piano music*

In the new era of rapid development, the development speed of national piano music is relatively slow, with a single musical form and fewer genres and quantities of works, leading to the representative works of western piano music becoming the main teaching content. This is ultimately caused by the lack of representative works of Chinese ethnic piano music [2]. China's ethnic piano music works have shown a good development momentum in recent years, and more excellent music works have emerged, but compared with western countries, the number of these works is still not considerable. Statistics show that there are less than 1,000 pieces of ethnic piano music in China, and many of them are adapted according to the original traditional music, failing to be modern and popular. With few works of ethnic piano music, there are even fewer excellent works with training value and artistic value, which also leads to the one-sided and single teaching content in piano teaching.

C. *Imperfect teaching system of ethnic piano music*

The imperfect teaching system of ethnic piano music is mainly reflected in the short course time, the insufficient teaching content and the non-universality of the teaching objects [3]. Most of the professional piano teaching in colleges and universities does not specially offer ethnic piano music courses, allowing students

little opportunity and time to get in touch with ethnic piano music. Western piano music is the main content in the syllabus of piano teaching in most universities, while ethnic piano music is interspersed with the teaching process. In terms of teaching objects, ethnic piano music, which is not a specialized course for piano majors, can only attract a small number of students who are interested in it and cannot expand its application scope [4].

III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE APPLICATION OF ETHNIC PIANO MUSIC IN THE TEACHING OF PROFESSIONAL PIANO IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

College students majoring in music (especially piano) are the main force for the development of piano music art in the future. Their cognition of piano music will affect the inheritance and innovation of ethnic piano music. If students have a poor understanding and mastery of ethnic piano music, it may be regarded as the lack of professional breadth and depth. The infiltration of ethnic piano music into professional piano teaching in colleges and universities not only enriches the content of piano teaching, broadens the musical vision, but also provides an effective way for the inheritance of folk music culture. In the new era, the concept of diversified development needs to be gradually infiltrated into the students' ideological cognition in the daily teaching. If students only accept the technology, skills and music culture of Western piano music completely and singly, but ignore that of their own nation, their own piano technology and skills will be immature and incomplete, as well as the lack of musical culture. Taking ethnic piano music as the teaching content of piano teaching can not only improve and enrich students' piano playing skills and musical accomplishment, but also attract more people to learn, study and master ethnic piano music through the platform of professional music education in colleges and universities, so as to become the inheritors of ethnic piano music.

Ethnic piano music is the product of the fusion development of the unique ethnic folk music and the Western piano music in China. In the process of teaching ethnic piano music, teachers can explain the development of ethnic piano music to students to strengthen their understanding of ethnic piano music, improve their interest in learning, broaden their professional horizons and enhance their musical culture. It is probably one of the most effective measures to inherit and innovate ethnic piano music in the course of piano teaching. Piano teachers should grasp the characteristics of ethnic piano music in teaching, permeate the cultural spirit of national piano music to students, and cultivate more comprehensive and excellent musical talents.

IV. STRENGTHENING THE APPLICATION OF ETHNIC PIANO MUSIC IN PIANO TEACHING

A. Interpretation of works in piano music appreciation teaching

The level of music appreciation is an extremely important external expression of students' musical literacy, and in-depth interpretation of music content through music appreciation [6] is also a necessary condition for the formation of a good sense of music. Piano music appreciation is one of the important teaching methods to improve students' understanding of piano music. By combining in-class teaching with extracurricular activities, the teaching of music appreciation can be carried out to improve students' level of music appreciation. Classical ethnic piano music is formed by combining regional characteristics, traditional cultural connotation and piano music characteristics. It not only contains the emotions of composers and players, but also carries the core of music culture, which has a high appreciation value. Teachers can select classic piano songs to lead students to feel the unique changes in musical form, mode, timbre, rhythm and emotion, and to experience the artistic expression of the works and the musical emotion expressed by the pianist during performance. Due to the limitation of time, space, equipment and other conditions, teachers can conduct music appreciation teaching and tutoring through the network platform after class, so that students can gradually develop and improve their sense of music in the process of subtle influence. [7]

For example, in the first ethnic piano music appreciation class, the author chose, *March of Peace*, marking the beginning of the development of Chinese national piano music, for teaching. The works reflect the love of the motherland and are of high value to improve students' appreciation of ethnic piano music. The melody of *March of Peace* is relatively light, which is the embodiment of the creator's yearning for peace in his heart, and also demonstrates the good quality of Chinese people's gentleness and sincerity. The works are of moderate difficulty, suitable for students to practice independently after class (including solfeggio scores, one-hand test, hand-in-hand slow practice until they are proficient in playing and reciting). This enables students to better understand the emotions and profound contents conveyed in *March of Peace* in the process of repeated practice.

B. Improving students' interest in learning through teaching reform

Most students majoring in piano in colleges and universities study as art students before entering colleges and universities, and judge whether they can study in colleges and universities by combining their art

scores and cultural scores in the college entrance examination. However, art students share a common feature, that is, they have a strong intention to enter the school. Few students choose to study piano because they really love the piano, and most of them choose to study piano because they want to enter the university or for future employment [8]. As a result, students' interest in learning ethnic piano music is low. They believe that the development of ethnic piano music is slow and the development situation is poor, which can neither provide support for their academic performance nor broaden their employment prospects. Piano requires students to have a high level of musical sense and playing skills, so students need to invest a lot of time for training, which will reduce students' interest in learning and cannot improve their enthusiasm for learning national piano music. Against such situation, teachers must reform and explore the teaching mode, and try their best to find teaching methods that make the teaching of ethnic piano music more interesting, mobilize students' subjective initiative, and encourage students to take the initiative in the learning of ethnic piano music.

For example, with the rapid development of information technology, teachers can allow students intuitively appreciate and feel the ethnic piano music in class through information technology, create a good teaching atmosphere, and stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning. The use of multimedia teaching equipment can not only enable students to hear the ethnic piano music intuitively, but also watch the video of playing ethnic piano music, which plays a positive role in promoting the teaching of fingering. After class teaching, teachers can extract the key points in the teaching content of this class, such as the characteristics, schools and playing skills of ethnic piano music, and condense these points into a short micro-class video for students to learn specially after class. The application of multimedia devices in class and the downloading and review of after-class videos can enhance students' learning effect and improve their understanding of ethnic piano music [9].

Teachers can also actively organize students to participate in ethnic piano concerts so that students can have more direct contact with ethnic piano music performance. Ethnic piano concerts can create a stronger musical atmosphere, help students to appreciate piano music and inspire their deep love for ethnic piano music. The combination of practical activities and classroom teaching can enrich the teaching model, accelerate the reform of piano teaching, and improve the integration of ethnic piano music teaching and piano teaching in universities.

C. *The aural ability training with the ethnic piano music as the teaching content*

Listening ability is the basic skill for students majoring in music to feel music, learn music and improve their artistic and aesthetic abilities. The training of listening ability is an important training content for students to improve their music level, as well as the basic training content for them to learn ethnic piano music. A good sense of hearing is the basis for students to develop a sense of music. The manifestation of piano performance is sound. Through the combination of notes of different tones and timbre, music is finally formed, so that the audience can feel the emotions in the music through hearing. This requires the players to have a certain degree of control over the different components of the music, such as the level of the voice, timbre, tone quality, rhythm sensation and rhythmical image. Through the composer's use of certain composition techniques, the piano, a Western musical instrument, is used to simulate the timbre of ethnic musical instruments, such as plucked stringed instrument or blown instruments, so that ethnic piano music presents new characteristics. The application of ethnic piano music in training students' auditory ability can strengthen students' cognition of the characteristics of ethnic piano music, so that students can better understand the national and cultural features of ethnic piano music [10].

For example, the representative works of Chinese ethnic piano music, such as *Chinese Cowboy With His Flute* and *A Wonderful Night In Spring*, have added traditional musical instrument performances. In *Chinese Cowboy With His Flute*, the technique of embellishments and variations is added, making the piano music more graceful and vivid, as if to reproduce the scene of the shepherd boy playing the flute on the back of the cow. Teachers can encourage students to carry out auditory training with the help of *Chinese Cowboy With His Flute*, to experience the emotional changes conveyed therein, and to appreciate the local flavor and strong rhythm contrast in the ethnic piano music. China's ethnic piano music reveals the cultural connotation with traditional characteristics. In the long-term training process, students can have a better understanding of the cultural background, so as to improve students' cultural accomplishment and piano literacy.

D. *Improving the teaching system for ethnic piano music*

The improvement of the ethnic piano music teaching system plays an irreplaceable role in enriching the piano teaching system in colleges and universities, and the improvement of the effectiveness of the national piano music teaching is also of great significance to the improvement of the quality of piano teaching. First, colleges and universities should

incorporate ethnic piano music teaching into the teaching of professional courses, so as to make ethnic piano music teaching one of the compulsory courses for students majoring in music, and promote the application of ethnic piano music in piano teaching by using compulsory teaching curriculum. In addition, ethnic piano music can also be set up as a quality course among students of other majors in colleges and universities. Second, teachers should combine the excellent ethnic piano music repertoire to set the teaching content, summarize the development, genre, skills and characteristics of ethnic piano music, so as to improve the orderliness of teaching and avoid the problems of mixed teaching contents in the previous piano teaching process [11]. In the teaching process of ethnic piano music, it is necessary to add the development history of ethnic piano music, so that students can have an understanding of its internal historical background and cultural connotation in the learning process. Finally, the assessment system corresponding to the ethnic piano music was set up to include the assessment of ethnic piano music into the final examination, so as to raise the attention of students and teachers. Many college students think the final exam is just a formality, just to make sure they pass. Therefore, if the ethnic piano music is not included in the examination system, students will ignore the ethnic piano music and pay too much attention to the training of the examination repertoire.

E. The construction of high quality ethnic piano music teachers

Piano teachers play an important role in the development of piano teaching in colleges and universities, and are the important factors that determine the effect and quality of piano teaching. Therefore, it is necessary to build a high-quality team of ethnic piano music teachers, so that students can learn ethnic piano music better. Teachers who are responsible for teaching ethnic piano music not only need to have a profound understanding of ethnic piano music, understand its representative repertoire and school characteristics, but also need to have an understanding of the cultural connotation of ethnic piano music, so as to ensure that they can deliver more valuable information to students in the teaching process [12]. Teachers of ethnic piano music also need to have a good sense of ethnic culture, so as to change the cognitive limitations of paying too much attention to Western piano music in the past and enhance their love and attention to ethnic piano music. Only when teachers truly love ethnic piano music, can they infect students with their own enthusiasm and attitude in the teaching process, so as to promote students to gradually like ethnic piano music and strengthen their piano music quality. Colleges and universities also need to train ethnic piano music teachers on a regular basis, so that

teachers can understand the development and innovation of ethnic piano music, allowing them to flexibly add new teaching content in the teaching process and improve the quality of piano music teaching.

V. CONCLUSION

Piano major is one of the key majors in art teaching in colleges and universities, which has cultivated talents with high musical literacy. However, the single teaching of Western music theory or music culture will cause students to despise traditional culture. The integration of ethnic piano music in piano teaching in colleges and universities can make students have a deeper understanding of piano culture, enrich students' knowledge reserve and piano skills, and promote the development of ethnic piano music. The continuous improvement of the integration of traditional national culture and modern education will greatly improve the quality of the cultivated talents, boasting not only rich theoretical knowledge and practical experience, but also good humanistic quality, which is conducive to the establishment and development of a harmonious society.

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