

The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon in Musicology and Aesthetics

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is 1) To analyze the Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon in Musicology and Aesthetics.

The research method of this study is qualitative methods. the key informants were educator experts They were selected by inclusion criteria the research instrument for the data collection were interview form

The research results were found as follows; 1) through interviews with field experts and group discussions, The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" in musicology showcases a melodic structure blending traditional Chinese musical elements with modern composition. It features pentatonic scales, ornamental flourishes, and intervallic leaps, creating elegance and fluidity. Characterized by grace notes, trills, bends, arpeggiated figures, modal inflections, and repetitive motifs, the piece evokes emotive responses, capturing poetic imagery, emotional resonance, tension, release, and thematic richness within its melodic framework, 2) In aesthetics, The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon reflects traditional Chinese musical aesthetics through pentatonic scales, modal inflections, and subtle ornamentation, embodying values of nostalgia, tranquility, and contemplation inherent to Chinese music.

Keywords: The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon, Musicology, Aesthetics

Introduction

Ren Guang's 1935 composition "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" is a well-known example of Cantonese music, with its light and unique style that portrays ordinary life. It is a reflection of Cantonese folk music, fusing Western composition with traditional Chinese components. Through structural, harmonic, and reception research, one can enhance appreciation within both Chinese and Western music traditions by delving into its historical, cultural, and aesthetic components and stressing the fusion of Chinese national music with Western musical influences (Xu, 2017).

Due to social and cultural forces, Wang Jianzhong's piano composition of "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" became popular in 1975. Despite being less valued on a conscious level, this version became quite well-liked by the general public. Through the use of Western classical piano technique combined with traditional musical elements, this Chinese piano version uses the piano to portray Chinese cultural imagery and feelings. It is influenced by the common imagery found in ancient Chinese literature, such as mountains, rivers, clouds, mist, and moonlit evenings that are frequently portrayed in classical poetry (Wu, 2018: 54-60).

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The academic study of music, known as musicology, examines the composition, performing techniques, cultural background, historical evolution, and aesthetic and social effects of music. To understand the creation, reception, and societal significance of music, musicologists employ interdisciplinary methodologies to evaluate music from a variety of historical periods, cultural contexts, and genres. A classic of Chinese classical music, "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" is an old Chinese traditional work that focuses on depicting a natural landscape. It embodies the poetry and philosophy of ancient Chinese culture, expressing creative notions of moonlit evenings, white clouds, people's relationship to nature, and emotions through dreamy, lingering melodies (Sun, 2023: 297–333). Therefore, it is a work worthy of deep analysis with musicological theory.

In the fields of musicology and the arts, aesthetics is the philosophical study of taste, beauty, and the arts. Aesthetics in musicology studies how musical compositions affect listeners' feelings, transmit meaning, and produce experiences. The relationship between form and expression, the significance of emotion in music, the impact of cultural context on aesthetic evaluations, and the ways in which music affects human perception and thought processes are all taken into account by aesthetic theories in musicology. This area of study addresses questions of what makes music meaningful or beautiful, as well as how it affects both people and societies. As our understanding of the natural world grows, ecological aesthetics has drawn notice for highlighting the peaceful coexistence of people with the environment, society, and other people (Miao, 2024).

Research Objectives

To analyze the Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon in Musicology and Aesthetics.

Literature review

The Musicology of Music

The academic study of music, or musicology, includes a number of fields, including systematic musicology, ethnomusicology, historical musicology, and music theory. Contrarily, music theory is a subfield of musicology that focuses on the examination and comprehension of the compositional components, structure, and principles of music. It includes the study of harmony, rhythm, form, notation, scales, and composition, giving students the skills they need to comprehend, analyze, and compose music. Thus, music theory focuses on the structure and mechanics of musical compositions and practices, whereas musicology studies music in its more general cultural, historical, and social settings.

Historical musicology

The academic study of music in a historical setting is known as historical musicology. It entails evaluating and interpreting music in light of its intellectual, social, political, and cultural contexts. Historians of music study a wide range of topics related to the history of music, such as composers, genres, styles, performance techniques, patronage, and how music was received in various historical and geographic contexts. In order to comprehend the development of musical styles, the influence of historical events on music, and the lives of composers, this discipline frequently entails the critical analysis of primary materials, such as musical scores, treatises, letters, and other historical records (Spiess, 1963). The study of historical musical forms and civilizations, as well as how they were performed, transmitted, and received from the beginning of recorded history to the present, is known as historical

musicology. Through a critical analysis of musical notation, literary works, musical instruments, and other artifacts, it examines the cultural connotations of musical expression (Davie, 2017).

The emergence of historical ethnomusicology is mainly due to the lack of thinking and attention to the historical dimension in the traditional synchronic research of ethnomusicology. Influenced by the concept of interdisciplinary research of historical anthropology, ethnomusicology began to emphasize the combination with diachronic research, shifting from the present and static text analysis and field description to the research of the historical context and the changes in the generation process of musical phenomenon. The keyword for subject research is historical ethnomusicology; the concept's evolution reflects the changing idea, paradigm, and way of thinking about ethnomusicology. Following its introduction to China, ethnomusicology was combined with studies of Chinese traditional music, Chinese music history, and other topics. As a result, the discipline's study category, research perspective, and research idea progressively started to become "localized" in China. The development of the "Chinese academic theoretical discourse system" of ethnomusicology greatly depends on the scholarly practice of "Chinese experience" in historical ethnomusicology.

The Aesthetics of Music

The philosophical study of the nature and principles of expressiveness, emotional effect, and beauty in musical compositions and performances is known as aesthetics of music. It entails investigating the ways in which musical components including melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre produce artistic experiences, arouse feelings, and transmit meaning. In addition, this discipline delves into more general inquiries about how music is perceived as beautiful, how culture shapes musical aesthetics, and how music interacts with other artistic mediums. It also explores the subjectivity and objectivity of musical enjoyment, the influence of environment on musical aesthetics, and the ways in which people perceive and react to musical stimuli (Yang, 2017).

Aesthetics in Music

Music, throughout every age and era, maintains a profound relationship with humanity. It reflects the way of life, society, and living conditions. People's emotions are embedded within songs, enabling listeners to grasp the aesthetic value of music in three distinct ways: story value, stylistic value, and aesthetic value.

Story Value: Each period's musical compositions convey unique narratives. Listeners gain insight into the characteristics of music from different eras, accessing the imagination and emotions inherent in each song. For instance, early Christian hymns, operas, and Baroque dance music reflect the evolving nature of musical expression.

Form Value: The form value in Western music pertains to the structure and melody of a piece. Understanding a song's form enables listeners to discern its distinct characteristics, fostering a deeper comprehension. This value divides into two main forms: Program Music narrates stories through music, depicting events or characters described in the narrative, while not categorized as storytelling songs, encompasses dance tunes, national and religious songs, and vocal music such as opera, oratorio, and singing (Yang, 2017).

The nature of music that depicts a story varies according to its concept or meaning, originating from the author's desire to convey a specific narrative. This musical expression encompasses:

1) Expressive Music: Conveying emotion and atmosphere to evoke specific feelings based on the story's nature.

2) Narrative Music: Using music to depict literary stories or real events, transforming written compositions into musical language.

3) Depictive Music: Imitating various sounds, such as those found in nature or human experiences, through musical interpretations.

Additionally, Absolute music is pure music based on structural principles; it stresses melodic content without attempting to tell a particular tale. This style, which is typical of the classical era, does not include vocal music, where the words are more important. Bach's Suite and Fugue and the sonatas by Haydn and Mozart are two examples. This kind of music is characterized by titles like "Symphony No. 40 in G Minor," "Piano Sonata in A Major," and "Waltz in D flat Major," which place all the emphasis on musical expression rather than descriptive naming.

Aesthetic Value

Aesthetics, or the sense of beauty that is experienced through hearing and thought, is embodied by music as a scientific discipline. Through thoughtfully structured and melodic sounds, the composer's thoughts are made explicit in the beauty of the music, creating a lasting effect on the listener. Comprehending the structural construction of music is necessary to appreciate its aesthetic worth. linked the fundamental components of music to human beings, equating melody to the spirit, rhythm to the heart, harmony to the soul, and structure (Form) to the skeleton. In addition to mastering musical techniques, appreciating the beauty of music requires an understanding of the songs' genres and historical context. There are a number of ways to access the value of music:

1) Education and knowledge about music, encompassing music theory and history.

2) Developing musical skills through practice, whether in singing or playing instruments.

3) Understanding rhythm, which forms the foundation of music, intensifying emotional connections with songs.

4) Engaging in active listening, involving steps such as focusing initially on individual instruments, comparing playing styles across different bands, studying the song's history, experiencing large orchestral performances, and eventually practicing musical instruments to gain analytical and critical insights into songs.

5) Embracing the emotions and atmosphere within songs, identifying various melodies and comparing them with those from different eras to discern diverse song types.

By delving into these approaches, listeners can deepen their understanding and appreciation of music, broadening their emotional and historical connection to different compositions.

6) Levels of Listening to Music

Passive listening: Occurs without intention, where the listener's heart and mind are not fully engaged with the music. The effect usually leads to entertainment and comfort, creating an ambient atmosphere during various activities such as dining at a restaurant, shopping in a mall, or reading a book.

Sensuous listening: involves listening intently, with the focus being on the specifics of the music, such as the vibrant sound of the violin or the forceful beats of the drum. This stage prepares the listener to recognize the aesthetic worth of the music by requiring some experience or knowledge of it. engaging the listener's emotions and getting them to relate the

music to personal experiences allows for the release of emotional responses that are in line with the normal emotional swings of people. This is known as emotional listening. Even if their comprehension of music may be restricted, listeners engage more deeply when they hear songs that reflect their own emotional states.

Perceptive listening: Focuses on perceiving the aesthetic beauty of various musical elements, requiring concentration and a calm mental and emotional state. Experienced listeners can discern the artistic composition of melody, rhythm, color, sound, and harmony, expressing gratitude for the unique and complete audio art creations within the music.

Aesthetic value in music is not universally appreciated; its perception varies among individuals. To truly access the beauty of music, a listener must possess knowledge, understanding, and rich listening experiences to recognize and appreciate the structural form and sensitive content within music, fostering gratitude and aesthetic pleasure.

Research Scope

The research methodology was Qualitative Research which collected data by interviewing key informants

Research tools: interview form Create questionnaires for use in expert interviews. Examine the survey and expert interview questionnaires for quality.

Key informants: Associate professor Jiang Yuanyuan, Kunming University, Professor Tang Biao, Kunming University, Professor Zhang Xin, Kunming University

Data collection: 1) Collect, sort and analyze literature, 2) Concept definition and theoretical framework of research, 3) Create questionnaires for use in expert interviews, 4) Examine the survey and expert interview questionnaires for quality, 5) Data Collection and analyze

Data analysis: The data from the interview will be analyzed by using content analysis.

Research Conceptual Framework

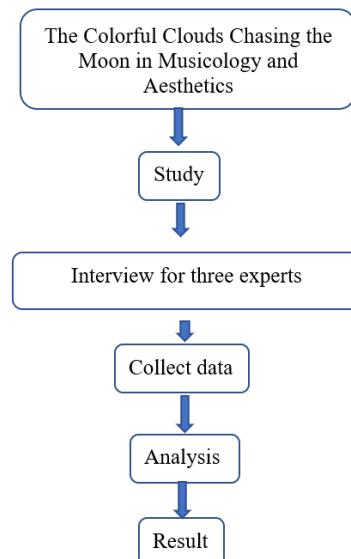


Figure 1: Research Conceptual Framework

Research Results

The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon in Musicology

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彩云追月

【广东民乐】 付林填词
J=100 (根据朱明瑛演唱音频记谱) 任光曲
竹笛 岭南印象制谱

竹笛 (3. 2 4 3 1 | 1 6. 6 - | 3. 1 2 2 1 | 1 - - -) |

||: 5. 6 1 2 3 5 | 6 - - - | 6 1 6 5 3 5 | 6 1 6 5 3 5 |

1.3. 站在白沙滩, 翘首遥望, 情思绵绵,
2. 明月照窗前, 一样的相思, 一样的离愁,

6 1 6 5 3 5 6 | 3 - - - | 3 5 3 2 1 2 | 3 5 3 2 1 2 |

何日你才能回国还。波涛滚滚, 绵延无边,
月缺尚能复原。日复一日, 年复一年,

3 5 3 2 1 5 6 | 1 - - - | 1 2 3 6 5 3 3 | 6 1 5 6 6 |

我的相思泪已干。亲人何亲人你可听见, 我
一海相隔难相见。亲人何亲人我在盼,

1 5 7 6 5 6 5 | 5 3 - - - | 2 3 5 2 3. 5 | 5 3 2 1 1 6 - |

轻声的呼唤。门前小树已成绿荫,
盼望相见的明天。鸟儿倦飞也知还,

5 6 5 4 3 5 2 3 2 | 1 - - (6 7 1 2 | 6 1 5 0 6 6 | 5 - 3 - |

何日相聚在堂前。
盼望亲人乘归

3 2 6 6 1 2 | 1 - - -) | 1 - - - | (5 6 5 2 2 3 1 | 2 5 1 6 -) |

帆。 D.C. 前。

Figure1: The score of The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon

The melodic structure of The Colorful Clouds Chasing as a fusion of traditional Chinese musical motifs with modern compositional elements. The melody features pentatonic scales, ornamental flourishes, and intervallic leaps, creating a sense of elegance and fluidity. Specific characteristics include grace notes, trills, bends, scalar runs, arpeggiated figures, modal inflections, and repetitive motifs that add color, expressiveness, depth, and sophistication. These elements contribute to the emotive quality, capturing poetic imagery, emotional resonance, tension, release, and thematic richness within the piece's melodic framework.

The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon, sound perspectives are crucial in creating a multi-dimensional auditory experience. They describe how spatial placement, dynamic

contrast, and instrumental timbres work together to immerse listeners in a shifting tapestry of sound. By strategically manipulating instrument placement within the stereo field, the music achieves depth and movement. Dynamic contrasts in volume and intensity create tension and release, reflecting the emotional trajectory of the composition. The intricate use of sound perspectives enriches the listening experience, inviting audiences on a captivating journey through musical textures and colors, evoking vivid and immersive auditory experiences with emotional resonance and thematic clarity.

Experts highlight that in *The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon*, harmonic progressions and chordal structures are intricately designed to evoke emotional depth and resonance within the composition. They mention a blend of traditional Chinese harmonic idioms with modern Western techniques, creating a rich tonal palette. The music transitions between consonance and dissonance, employing extended chords, modal inflections, and chromatic harmonies for complexity. These elements deepen emotional impact, conveying poignancy, introspection, and catharsis. Harmonic colors, suspensions, voicings, and shifts enhance tension, resolution, longing, nostalgia, and beauty, inviting listeners into an emotionally intense and musically beautiful world. Through a sophisticated framework merging traditional Chinese principles with contemporary techniques, the piece explores tonal centers, modulations, quartal and quintal harmonies, added-tone chords, and pan diatonicism, eliciting a wide spectrum of emotional responses from serenity to yearning, adding complexity, sophistication, and authenticity to captivate and engage listeners.

The ornamentation, articulation, and stylistic nuances in *The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon* are skillfully used to convey expressiveness and emotion, enriching the composition with subtlety and depth. Traditional Chinese ornamentation techniques like trills and grace notes are combined with Western articulations such as staccato and legato to add dynamism and color. These embellishments emphasize melodic contours, emotional peaks, and spontaneity, enhancing the music's vitality. Rhythmic variations, phrasing choices, and dynamic shadings further enhance the expressive quality, contributing to emotional impact and immersive power. Drawing from traditional Chinese practices and contemporary techniques, the piece blends cultural styles to create a captivating fusion resonating emotionally. The use of ornamental embellishments, articulation variations, and stylistic contrasts adds texture, emotive quality, and narrative depth inspired by traditional Chinese musical aesthetics, engaging listeners with culturally rich and emotionally resonant performances that capture the essence of both traditional and contemporary sensibilities.

The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon in Aesthetics

Experts emphasized that "*The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon*" reflects traditional Chinese musical aesthetics through elements like pentatonic scales, modal inflections, and subtle ornamentation, embodying values of nostalgia, tranquility, and contemplation intrinsic to Chinese music. Historically, the piece is culturally significant as it pays homage to classical Chinese music while embracing modern techniques, bridging tradition and innovation. It serves as a reminder of China's musical legacy, showcasing continuity of artistic expression across generations and reaffirming the timeless relevance of traditional Chinese aesthetics in contemporary music. The composition embodies cultural authenticity, historical resonance, and ongoing evolution of ancient aesthetic principles in a contemporary context. By seamlessly integrating traditional motifs with innovative techniques, the piece honors the heritage of Chinese music while engaging with global musical influences, exemplifying the dynamic interplay between tradition and creativity in shaping Chinese musical identity.

the importance of dynamics, phrasing, and expressivity in shaping the emotional landscape and narrative arc of "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon." Dynamics create contrast and tension, allowing for modulation of volume and intensity to evoke various emotions. Phrasing provides structure and guides listeners through rhythmic flow and shape, while expressive elements like vibrato and articulation inflections enrich the music with depth and personal expression. These techniques transform the composition into a captivating tapestry of sound, immersing audiences in evocative beauty and emotional resonance. Dynamics sculpt the piece's contours, creating tension and resolution, while phrasing shapes the music's direction and structure. Expressive elements add nuance and individuality, imbuing each phrase with personality and emotional depth. Together, these techniques form the foundation of interpretation, breathing life into the notes and communicating the essence of the composition with clarity, sensitivity, and artistry.

"The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" fits into traditional Chinese music by incorporating elements like pentatonic scales, modal inflections, and subtle ornamentation while also showcasing innovative approaches. It distinguishes itself by seamlessly integrating Western harmonic structures and contemporary idioms, creating a fusion of East and West that pushes boundaries while honoring tradition. The composition stands out as forward-looking, bridging cultural boundaries and embracing diverse influences to breathe new life into traditional Chinese musical forms. This work showcases artistic innovation and cross-cultural dialogue, departing from convention to explore new sonic territories while retaining reverence for cultural heritage. Despite its departure from strict traditional norms, it strikes a delicate balance between preservation and innovation, highlighting the enduring vitality of Chinese musical expression in a globalized world.

Traditional instruments like the guzheng, pipa, erhu, and dizi in "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" play a crucial role in expressing cultural identity and artistic tradition within the piece by anchoring it in the rich tapestry of Chinese musical heritage. These instruments carry historical significance, embodying cultural continuity and authenticity while linking the music to its roots. Stylistic choices such as melodic ornamentation, modal scales, and rhythmic patterns further reinforce this cultural identity, resonating with expressive nuances and aesthetic sensibilities of Chinese musical aesthetics. Through a symbiosis of traditional instruments and stylistic elements, the composition becomes a poignant reflection of Chinese cultural identity and artistic legacy, encapsulating the spirit of a vibrant and enduring musical tradition.

Understanding the cultural and historical background of "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" enhances the listener's aesthetic appreciation and understanding of the music by providing a contextual framework that imbues the piece with layers of meaning and significance. Exploring its roots in Chinese history and folklore allows listeners to engage with narratives beyond mere notes and melodies, connecting themes of nature, spirituality, and human emotion present in Chinese artistic traditions. Awareness of cultural symbolism within the composition deepens listeners' connections to the emotional depth and expressive subtleties of traditional Chinese music, fostering a richer aesthetic experience that transcends auditory pleasure. By immersing oneself in the cultural and historical backdrop of the piece, listeners embark on a journey of discovery that transforms listening into a multidimensional aesthetic experience, resonating with echoes of the past while illuminating pathways to new realms of understanding and appreciation.

Discussion

Research objectives was to study on analyze the Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon in Musicology and Aesthetics, found that The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon in Musicology, the melodic structure of The Colorful Clouds Chasing as a fusion of traditional Chinese musical motifs with modern compositional elements. The melody features pentatonic scales, ornamental flourishes, and intervallic leaps, creating a sense of elegance and fluidity. Specific characteristics include grace notes, trills, bends, scalar runs, arpeggiated figures, modal inflections, and repetitive motifs that add color, expressiveness, depth, and sophistication. These elements contribute to the emotive quality, capturing poetic imagery, emotional resonance, tension, release, and thematic richness within the piece's melodic framework corresponds to (Wu, 2018: 54-60). The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon in Aesthetics, Experts emphasized that "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" reflects traditional Chinese musical aesthetics through elements like pentatonic scales, modal inflections, and subtle ornamentation, embodying values of nostalgia, tranquility, and contemplation intrinsic to Chinese music corresponds to (Xu, 2017).

Conclusion

The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon exemplifies a fusion of traditional Chinese musical motifs with modern compositional elements, offering a captivating melodic structure rich in elegance, emotional resonance, and thematic complexity. Through intricate sound perspectives, harmonic progressions, ornamentation techniques, and stylistic nuances, the piece creates immersive auditory experiences that engage listeners on both emotional and intellectual levels. In terms of aesthetics, the composition embodies traditional Chinese musical values while embracing innovation, showcasing a dynamic interplay between tradition and creativity. By integrating cultural authenticity, historical resonance, and cross-cultural influences, The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon serves as a testament to the enduring vitality and evolution of Chinese musical expression within a global context.

Finding new knowledge:

The analysis of The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon in musicology and aesthetics sheds light on the intricate fusion of traditional Chinese musical elements with contemporary practices, illustrating how the piece navigates between cultural authenticity and artistic innovation. It reveals the importance of understanding cultural and historical contexts in enhancing aesthetic appreciation and deepening emotional connections to music. Moreover, the exploration of dynamics, phrasing, expressivity, and instrument choices showcases how these elements shape the emotional landscape and narrative arc of a musical composition. By acknowledging the significance of traditional instruments and stylistic choices in expressing cultural identity, the study underscores the ongoing dialogue between tradition and modernity in shaping musical identities. Ultimately, the examination of "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" highlights the richness, diversity, and evolving nature of Chinese musical aesthetics, offering insights into the dynamic interplay of tradition, innovation, and cultural heritage in contemporary music.

Recommendation

This article studies focusing on audience perceptions and responses to traditional Chinese music and contemporary compositions like "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon"

could reveal how cultural heritage, innovation, and cross-cultural influences impact listeners' aesthetic experiences and emotional engagement. Moreover, delving into the composer's intentions behind creating "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" may offer a deeper understanding of the creative process, inspirations, and musical choices that blend traditional Chinese motifs with modern compositional elements, highlighting the intersection of cultural identity and artistic innovation in the composition.

Recommendations for further research

Future research on Chinese traditional songs and "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" could delve into various aspects to deepen our understanding of these musical forms. One avenue for investigation is comparative analysis, which could illuminate similarities, differences, influences, and innovations in musical structure and cultural significance between "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon" and other traditional Chinese songs. Additionally, exploring performance practices specific to interpreting this piece could shed light on stylistic nuances, ornamentation techniques, and expressive elements that enhance authenticity and emotional depth in performances. Understanding the historical and cultural contexts of traditional Chinese music, as well as the thematic content and emotional expression within "The Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon," can provide insights into societal values, artistic traditions, and folklore that shape this musical aesthetics.

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