

# The characteristics of piano music style in Romantic Period

**Jiang Haijiao**

*Sichuan Conservatory of music, Chengdu Sichuan 610021, China*

**ABSTRACT.** *The romantic period is a core period in the history of piano art. It inherits the classical period at the same time. In addition, they rebelled against the tradition, the classical model and the authority of binding force. In this period, the piano music paid more attention to the free expression and expression of personality, subjectivity and emotion. The differences of individuals and nationalities made the music present a colorful state. In addition, the perfection of piano and the unlimited pursuit of piano skills make this century the peak age of piano music development.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Romanticism; Piano music; Style features*

From the beginning to the middle of the 19th century, a new music trend took place in Europe. Its influence lasted until the second half of the 19th century, which was called "romanticism". "Romantic" - the word comes from romance. In literature, it refers to a legendary story or poem written in Romanian in the middle ages that tells the story of heroes. Here it refers to a literary trend of thought at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. The piano works in the romantic period are all kinds of rebellions against the tradition, classical mode and binding authority. They attach importance to the free expression and expression of personality, subjectivity and emotion, so that this century becomes the peak era of piano music development.

## **1. Music content**

### ***1.1 Pay attention to personal subjective emotional experience***

From the end of the 18th century to the beginning of the 19th century, the British Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution had a huge impact on the politics and economy of European countries. People's ideology, social and cultural structure, artistic appreciation and so on have changed greatly, and the status of composers has also changed fundamentally. They abandoned the traditional form and created a large number of works to adapt to the social change. These works often borrow the medieval legends and myths as the content to metaphor the conflict between individuals and society, and extol the greatness and loftiness of love and the freedom and equality of human beings. They tried to express their emotional world in piano

music and put their personal feelings in their works.

### ***1.2 Enhance national content and interest***

Another prominent feature of romanticism is the increase of national factors. Chopin to Poland, Liszt to mazaga, Schumann to Germany, Grieg to Norway, Glinka to Russia, etc., are all representatives of their own national spirit. The ancient legends of our nation

Stories and simple folk music materials occupy an important position in their works, and national tendency becomes an important part of composers' expression of emotion. For example, many of Chopin's works embody his national patriotic spirit (such as revolution) and national form (such as Mazurka and Polonaise); Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody; Grieg's local wedding day in troehagen, etc.

### ***1.3 Music title tendency***

In the period of romanticism, title has become an important tendency and feature. During this period, music was often combined with sister art, such as literature, drama, art, especially poetry. Therefore, the works of romantic composers tend to be more and more poetic and literary. Not only do they add descriptive titles to instrumental music, but also their musical images are becoming more and more intuitive, trying to explain the cultural content with musical language. For example, Shuman's childhood scene, 13 pieces of music, each piece of music has a small Title: such as "foreign and foreign people", "strange story", "hide and seek", etc., each of which vividly indicates the audience's thinking direction; another example, the ten titles of mosolsky's picture exhibition indicate the basic picture of each music, etc.

## **2. Characteristics of creative techniques**

### ***2.1 Technical writing techniques***

In this period, the structure of piano is becoming more and more perfect, and a group of professional piano players appear, who show off their excellent performance skills. In order to meet the requirements of performance, composers used a lot of dazzling technical writing techniques, especially Liszt. These techniques include: a large number of octaves (e.g. Liszt super Etude 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10), continuous major chords (e.g. Liszt super concert Etude 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8), decomposition chords with more than octaves, fast colorful passage sentences, various double tones (ghost fire), complex hands crossing, tremors and tremors, long-distance jumping (clock), key scraping, repetition (Tarantella), et c.

### ***2.2 The melody emphasizes lyricism***

In this period, piano composers focused on subjective life experience, internal psychological world description, and pursuit of imaginative and distinct music color, so touching or borrowing scenery Lyric became their creative characteristics. This kind of emotional expression to the melody, it becomes lyrical music language. The melody is fluctuating and flexible, such as Chopin's Nocturne, the first ballad and so on.

### ***2.3 Harmony is rich, colorful and complicated***

The harmony in the romantic period is further expanded on the basis of the classical functional harmony. Harmony is rich and colorful. Fresh harmonic effects can be obtained by using chord overtones, changing chord, extended chord (seventh chord, Ninth chord, eleventh chord, etc.), complex chord (heavy genus, heavy guide chord; sub genus, deputy guide chord), etc. At the same time, a large number of uncoordinated chords have been added. The development of harmony is beyond the range of regularity.

### ***2.4 Tonal music is dominant, but there is a sense of ambiguity***

The music of romanticism belongs to tonality, but the tonality of this period is not limited to the close relation like classicism. Because of the complexity of harmony, the tonality in this period leads to the complexity of tonality, and the transfer of distant relationship appears frequently. For example, in Chopin's Etude 10-4, the 16-27 bars are the two bars with different tunes. This frequent rotation of tonality is more obvious in the later stage of romanticism, which leads to the late creation of Liszt, Chopin and Wagner, each of which reaches the edge of tonality collapse through different ways.

### ***2.5 Diversity of genres***

Romanticism is the peak period of the development of piano music. There are new genres with strong romantic temperament in the genre. Such as impromptu, Nocturne, ballad, Scherzo, concert etude, Fantasia, dance music of various folk colors (Mazurka, Polish dance, Hungarian Rhapsody, etc.), wordless songs, etc., there are also pieces of music and sets composed of pieces (Schumann's carnival), etc. These genres are easy to use in the hands of romantic composers, and can be highly enriched, developed and improved.

All in all, the period of romanticism is a peak period. Musicians at that time, whether Schumann, Brahms, Chopin, Liszt, etc., are the greatest pianists in the world. They have established an immeasurable influence on modern piano schools; their piano works have left noble spiritual and cultural wealth for mankind.

**Reference**

- [1] Liu Peipei (2014). Performance style of piano school in romantic period. Sichuan drama, no.6, pp.149-151
- [2] Li Zehao (2019). On the style of piano works in romantic period. Northern music, no.10, pp.34-35.