

A Pedagogical Analysis of the Difficulties in Playing the Fourth Movement of Schubert's Piano Work "Vagabond Fantasia in C Major D.760"

Yi Liu^a, Baiyan Du^{b,*}

College of Teacher Education, Quzhou University, Quzhou, Zhejiang, 324003, China

^a920972302@qq.com, ^bdb365103269@gmail.com

*Corresponding author

Abstract: *Fantasia in C Major D.760 is a large-scale piano work created by Schubert. From the perspective of the creation background, musical structure and playing experience, this paper will analyze the rhythm, melody lines, touch keys, hand support, running and other issues combined with musical examples. This study can not only enrich the advance theory of the performance of Schubert's works, but also help other players to have a further understanding of Schubert's piano works and provide more enlightenment.*

Keywords: *Schubert, Fantasia of the Wanderer, Piano performance, Performance teaching*

1. Introduction

Schubert, a composer from Vienna, Austria, is often referred to as the "king of art songs". Among Schubert's piano works, Fantasia in C Major uses a variety of musical forms, including fantasy, variations, fugue, and jockeys. The melody and rhythm are free, following the form framework of the sonata of the classical period, but not completely consistent in form. This work was adapted and completed by Schubert based on the art song Derwanderer. The combination of his art song and piano works had a great influence on the development of music in the subsequent Romantic period [1]. Therefore, it can be understood that Schubert is not only the inheritor of the Vienna classical music tradition, but also the founder of romantic music.

In 1816, Schubert composed a male solo art song "The Wanderer", the work has a romantic color, mainly describes a wanderer's hope for his hometown, and the despair in a foreign country. In 1822, Schubert wrote Fantasia of the Wanderer in C Major D.760 while suffering from illness. The song depicts the utopian world that Schubert yearned for. The style of the song is painful and lonely, but also contains optimism. On behalf of Schubert's work completed under the dual conditions of illness and poverty, the perceptual association work of "Vagabond Fantasia in C Major D.760" has four movements in total, and the connection between movements is clever, which is mainly reflected in the connection form of the dominant motivation and the same theme. Compared with the traditional sonata form, the structure of this work changes more frequently [2].

In addition, the music of the classical period emphasized objective and regular development, and there were obvious contrasts between the themes of the music, which mainly reflected the effects of drama and conflict. It paid attention to the role of harmony and color, mainly sonata form and cyclotron form. The music of the Romantic period is opposite to the music of the classical period. It emphasizes subjective consciousness and can break the inherent rules and forms, conform to one's own feelings, and express inner feelings by using works. In this work, the structure and technique of the fourth movement itself have difficulties, which requires the performer to understand and play it in a rigorous and standardized way [3]. It is necessary to put forward effective practice methods for the technical difficulties in the work so as to achieve better performance results. Therefore, this paper analyses the rhythm, melodic line, key touch, hand support, running and other issues based on the composition background, structure and performance experience of the Wanderer Fantasy in C major, in conjunction with the examples of the score, in an attempt to enrich the prior study of Schubert's performance, and hopefully to help players gain a better understanding of Schubert's piano works and provide more insight.

2. Musical Structure of the Work

The whole movement is in C major and the rhythm is allegro. The musical structure diagram can be seen in Figure 1. The theme of this movement is fugue form, the first eight bars are the theme motive, and the melody gradually moves from the low part to the high part (bars 598-609).

The exposition part (bars 598-630) uses the fugue form in polyphonic technique. From the beginning, the music is played in octave double notes and gradually develops into multi-voice music. The intensity of this part is always between "f" and "fz", and the mood of the music is firm and powerful [4].

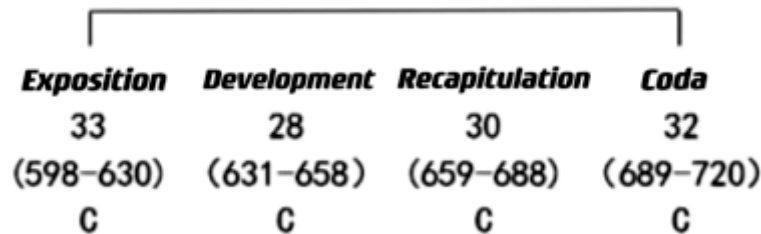


Figure 1: Musical structure diagram of the fourth movement of *Vagrant Fantasia in C Major D.760*

The music of the development (bar 631-658) gradually changes. The melody first develops in a double octave of the low part, the high part uses sixteenth note arpeggios as the accompaniment texture to highlight the melody of the low part, and then moves to the octave of the high part. The musical accompaniment texture uses the broken chord foundation to reveal the main melody part, and the fugue theme material runs through the music from beginning to end.

The recapitulation (bars 659-688) is an open passage in which the theme begins in variation, the melody is in the lower voices, the partial recapitulation of the expressive part, the key changes from C major to F major, G major, etc., the accompaniment becomes more varied, the music advances and develops the motive of the theme, and it echoes the end [5].

The epilogue (bar 689-720) returns to the key of C major. The musical intensity gradually increases, and the harmonic color shows the brilliant sound effect. Finally, under the intensity of "fff", the whole music ends with arpeggios, vibrations and other techniques to show the positive mood.

3. Explanation and Summary of the Difficulties of Playing

3.1. Octave and Chord Practice

In the fourth movement of the *Fantasia in C major D.760*, the octave is one of the most iconic technical points in the piece, with the left-hand part of bars 680-683 moving from the diatonic octave to the decomposed octave and back again. It is more important for the performer to practise the octave. The 1st and 5th fingers should be strongly supported, although the 5th finger itself is weak, the melodic part cannot be brought out if the strength is not properly controlled. In practice, the 5th finger is usually used to play the melodic voices, so its role and strength should be more prominent. Once the 1st and 5th fingers have been mastered in the double octave, try practising the 3rd and 4th fingers instead of the 5th finger in the double octave or in the broken octave, so as to achieve the ability to play with joint support. This can be done in conjunction with figure 2 of article 53 and figure 3 of article 56 of the *Hanon Piano Exercises*, taking care to avoid stiffness and tension in the wrist and arm, as prolonged stiffness and tension can easily lead to muscle damage[6].

In addition, the chords should be played in such a way as to emphasise the melodic voices. Chord practice can also be supplemented by octave practice, working on the outer treble and bass voices while muting the rest of the voice. Regardless of the timing and intensity of the chords, it is important to play with a clear tone and to use the strength of the body to bring out the fullness of the tone in the fingertips.



Figure 2: Exercise 53 from the Hanon Piano Exercises



Figure 3: Exercise 56 of the Hanon Piano Exercises

3.2. Polyphony in the Works

The polyphony technique does not occur very often in Schubert's piano works, but only in vocal works, such as the masterpieces *Winterreise* and *The Beautiful Mill Girl*, which show frequent polyphony, mainly in the use of contrasts between the accompanying and singing voices. The fourth movement of the *Wanderer Fantasy* in C major D.760, however, is treated in the fugue form of the polyphonic technique, where the fugue theme phrase is often of a contrasting nature to the counterpoint phrase, requiring them to be distinguished and the music to be more layered [7].

The work begins with a solo in the left hand with the motive of the theme in the first 8 bars (598-605), with a rhythmic motive showing a tendency towards downward eighth notes, and then the same motive appears in the answer and counterpoint from bar 606, with a variation on the theme unfolding and the theme changing from lower to higher voices. The first way to practise this type of polyphonic music is to identify the first and second motifs of the piece. After analysing the piece, a slow parting exercise is carried out, when each part is played with clarity and precision before being played together, where the sound presentation of the theme is to be noted, the polyphonic technique being concerned with each melodic line being parallel, but playing them in a different position. The theme is the central idea that dominates the whole piece. Whenever the theme appears, it should stand out. For example, bar 605 needs to fade to set the stage for the emergence of the theme in bar 606 (score example 6).



Figure 4: Bars 598-616 of the fourth movement

3.3. The Timbre Treatment of the Work

During the overall analysis of this work, it is found that it contains most of the "f" marks, and there are many places such as "sf" and "ff". These marks should be strictly followed during performance to avoid presenting noisy and cloudy sound effects. For example, the mark of "f" at the beginning of the work < Figure 4> shows that the music performance needs to be solid and stable, and only two parts appear in the first 8 bars of the fourth movement, and the fugue paragraph begins to appear after 8 bars, indicating that the music is gradual. If the volume is too heavy at the beginning, the development of the music will be insufficient in the later stage [8].

For the Wanderer Fantasy in C major, it is an analysis of three different vocal parts as a background for comparison. The first part: the tone is subdued and bright at the beginning of the soprano part. The second phrase has the lowest note (i.e. the weakly rising downward mark) in the twelfth bar of the previous phrase, and because this piece is faster, there are more strongly rising marks in the second phrase of this bar, and in the third phrase. The second part: the first time to C major Fantasia D-10 (i.e. weak C major), starting from the fourth level, the melodic nature gradually becomes less and the rhythm changes more quickly. The third part then begins at the twelfth level. Since these three voices are composed of three successive undulations, so the first passage is a one-dimensional contrasting melody, while the second and second sections in this bar are relatively smooth, and have some sense of regularity and jump.

3.4. Analysis of the Musical Style of the Classical Period as a Means of Creating the Musical Style of the Romantic Period

The Wanderer Fantasy in C major is a large-scale piano work, which belongs to the category of fantasy [9]. An analysis of the structure of the piece reveals that it is an adaptation of the traditional structure of the piece, which also belongs to the category of sonatas. In the early days of the composer's work, a special kind of string and or keyboard piece was formed through the free imagination of the polyphonic technique. This style of tunes is characterized by improvisation and more freedom in the style. The current common solo sonatas specifically include piano sonatas, violin, cello, flute sonatas and several others. Beethoven, on the basis of inheriting Mozart's movement pattern, added the slash movement to the violin and cello sonatas through the form of theme and variation structure. During the Romantic period, several composers adapted the sonata style, but the current sonata style has a more stable classical foundation. For the fantasia, which developed from the Renaissance, it was further innovated and developed in the classical period, in a series of creations by Beethoven, which added a romantic and free compositional approach to the sonata, forming a new way of composition. In his own piano works Schubert manifested the rhythmic motive of the work through thematic compositions, and later adjusted it from the whole, adopting the Romantic school of composition, fusing the material of the main and secondary parts of the music, reflecting the compositional technique of the work through a complex tone pattern, and later forming the tonality of the second movement under the transition of the vocal minor chord [10].

3.5. Technical Difficulties and Handling of the Rangers Fantasia

In the first movement of the Wanderer Fantasy in C major, the composer lays down the musical motive and musical ideas of the whole piece through resounding rhythmic techniques. In this regard, it is necessary to grasp the characteristics of that rhythmic style at a later stage. For example, in the first measure, the score is a four-beat metre, the pattern of accents is strong and weak changes, and there are accent marks in the second and third beats. The latter two octave subsections have more significant playing characteristics, for which it is necessary to grasp the strength when playing the specific, according to the characteristics of each bar, the scientific use of hand strength, in the specific playing of the first beat, it is necessary to have a certain amount of palm support role, to ensure that the tone is resounding and powerful, wrist has a strong. For the quarter notes you need to make sure to play the full. When playing the first eighth note at a later stage, it is necessary to relax the gravity appropriately by the reaction of the power of the palm pushing out during the accented chord, and after playing the same action to bring out the second eighth note, prompting the sound to have elastic characteristics. Both chords give a relaxed feeling, and in this exercise mode one can feel the strength and power of the Allegro, as well as the elastic character of the three chords [11]. In the second movement one can feel a melancholic atmosphere, which expresses the fantasy of a better life and the helplessness of the real life. In this regard, the scientific use of the left hand accompaniment is needed to convey a fast and low

feeling in the process of expression. For the right hand volume is weak, it can not exceed the left hand, mainly because the bass is easy to give people a fuzzy feeling, which people need to strengthen the practice of 64th notes, flexible control of finger strength, mastering piano scales, arpeggio practice skills and orthotonic practice skills, so as to better improve the flexibility of the fingers.

4. Conclusion

In fact, players' treatment of music score can be called second creation, that is, based on the original score, they carry out their own appropriate thinking and allocation, so that the image of music performance can conform to the connotation of the music, and also form the performance characteristics of the players themselves. The notation on the score is only a hint from the composer, and each person's understanding of the piece is different, and it is the understanding of the context of the piece that gives a different sense of performance, which is at the heart of the art of playing. Through this study, it can be seen that the work has the rigorous characteristics of classical music and the lyricism characteristics of romantic music. This work can train players in irregular arpeggios, fast running, chords, vibration and a large number of octaves and other difficult playing skills. For example, when practicing vocal vibration, we need to relax our arms and gradually form muscle memory through slow practice, we can also practice chords and intervals by adding dots with variations. Another example is the various octave forms in the whole song, the hand support in the process of practice, the wrist is relaxed and so on. These training methods allow players to overcome these difficulties when practicing. In short, players need to understand the background of the work and combine the technical difficulties of repeated practice, only in this way can the actual sound effect of the work be made.

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