

The role of Big Ruan in Chinese national chamber music—Take "Water Lotus" and "Green Plum Cooking Wine" as examples

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Abstract: The formation and development of Chinese national chamber music has experienced the temper of history, which reflects its musical charm as a traditional art. Da Ruan plays an irreplaceable role in the band and group, and in the national instrumental chamber music works. This paper analyzes the timbre, tone quality and playing methods of Da Ruan in Chinese national instrumental chamber music works, and sorts out how to realize Da Ruan's role in chamber music, and summarizes the role and development trend of Da Ruan in national instrumental chamber music. This instrument can not only solo, and in the band as a bass part, its sound quality is rounded and rich, beautiful, low and graceful. This instrument is not only a member of the national orchestra, but also plays an important role in the national instrumental chamber music and instrumental combination [1], especially in the performance of the chamber orchestra, Da Ruan has always played an important role in the bass part. With the improvement of the understanding of the value of traditional music, the small ensemble form of national instrumental music is tending to a more refined and standardized development path. In particular, the instrument began to gain the attention of composers and performers in general, and its use became increasingly frequent in newly created works.

1. Ruan's research and development and musical expression

Chinese national chamber music has experienced the evolution from folk to professional, traditional to modern, and Ruan musical instrument has undergone reform and improvement in shape, performance, timbre and other aspects in this process, and has become an indispensable and important voice part, especially Da Ruan with its deep and sad timbre to fill the vacancy of the bass voice. Ruan is one of the oldest plucked instruments in China. [2] Ruan instrument was once lost, we have not seen about Ruan handed down the music score and sound, only in the literature has the corresponding description and record. In folk music, ----, a music association founded in Shanghai from the 20th century to the 1930s, imitated the Ruan's form in the Song Dynasty and used it in group forms. Since the 1960s, according to the needs of Chinese ethnic orchestral music, Mr. Wang Zhongbing and the ethnic musical instrument factory carried out special development of Ruan, especially to the 1980s, set off the climax of the development of Ruan. At this stage, Ruan instruments were developed and improved, forming the Ruan family, including a large ruan for low voice, a middle ruan for middle voice, a small ruan for high voice and a high ruan for high voice. Subsequently, various music colleges opened Ruan majors one after another, which gradually pushed the inheritance and education of Ruan's Musical Instruments from the folk to the direction of academy.

With the Chinese national chamber music passing from folk to professional music universities and embarking on the road of professional development, Ruan musical instrument is also experiencing the development process from traditional style to modern standard, and its sound, timbre, expression and other problems are gradually improved in the reform. Both Zhong Ruan and Da Ruan reformed the shape, restored the sound hole, solved the problem of poor resonance effect of Ruan instrument, and changed the silk strings to metal strings, improved its sound penetration, increased the instrument to 24 pieces, and arranged according to the twelve equal law to expand the musical range of this instrument to more than two octaves. After the reform, the Ruan family is

more suitable for the performance of national instrumental chamber music [3]. In terms of skills, he fully draws on the playing skills of other plucked instruments, so that the playing techniques of Ruan's right hand (playing, picking, hook, wipe, wheel, whisk, point, shake, sweep, roll, button, stroke, etc.) reach more than 20 kinds, and the playing techniques of his left hand (pan, hit, belt, slide, push, pull, sing, stripe, etc.) reach more than 10 kinds. The use of these techniques has broadened the timbre and expressiveness of the Ruan clan. Through decades of reform, Ruan has demonstrated his unique timbre in terms of shape, performance, timbre, range, volume and playing techniques, and has become an indispensable part of the band [4]. The deep, sad, melancholy and melancholy tone of Da Ruan made up for the vacancy of bass voice in the chamber band of national instrumental music.

2. Analysis and realization of the Ruan timbre effect of national chamber music

2.1 The importance of traditional works: A case study of Teochew music "Lotus Out of Water"

"Water Lotus" is a relatively representative traditional Chaozhou music works. In this work, the support of the bass part makes the overall sound level more abundant. The music is divided into two parts: Adagio and allegro. In the adagio part, the mood is simple and deep, the performance of the phrases is relaxed and the tone head of each note should be aligned with the lead string. In order to meet the demand of bass sound, the Angle of entering the string should be deeper and match with the bow of the head string. When playing, the performer should make the mood deep and calm according to the characteristics of the timbre. Repeated (the second time) because the music requirements are more fluid than the previous paragraph, the player should adjust the pick into the string Angle, so that the melody is bright and smooth.

The allegro is played three times. When playing the first time, you should be comfortable, and the speed is controlled between 116-126; The second time is slightly faster than the first time (136-140), the whole band is weakened, and all players maintain a sense of tension; When playing the third time, the mood was completely open, passionate and enthusiastic, and the speed reached the fastest. After entering the allegro part, the whole mood enters the climax stage. In the whole music, due to the support of the rhythm of the big Ruan part and the stability of the harmonic root note, it sets off the atmosphere of the whole music.

2.2 The importance of Dazhong Ruan in modern works -- take "Green Plum Cooking Wine" as an example

The work "Green Plum Cooking Wine" was created by young composer Zhu Jie in 2016. It is a chamber music work for Xiao, Pipa, Da Ruan, Guzheng and Erhu [5]. In the content, the music depicts the allusion of the hero of brewing wine in the Romance of The Three Kingdoms, and Outlines two distinct contrasting images of Liu Bei and Cao Cao, who have great ambition but are cautious because of being guarded by others. On the basis of the use of traditional Chinese music elements, the composition techniques learn from western compositional techniques and modern music elements, and use Chinese music to tell Chinese stories and convey Chinese emotions.

The composer uses five Musical Instruments in the work to perform the characters of Cao Cao and Liu Bei vividly. Five Musical Instruments are divided into two groups of corresponding characters, Cao Cao-Pipa, Da Ruan and Guzheng show the heroic character characteristics, while Xiao and Erhu show the cautious image of Liu Bei's character. The song is divided into four parts: Part I (A-C), Part II (D-G), Part III (H-M), and Part IV (N-O).

In the first part (A-C), the introduction of the three bars and the melody of paragraph A is mainly carried out by xiao, and the melody of Erhu is added to the second half of paragraph A. In this section, the pipa, guzheng and Darian are the accompaniment parts, in which the guzheng plays the role of bass spread, and the Darian and pipa echo the use of special timbres such as percussion panels and overtones, which play the role of embellishing the melody. In the spectrum, Da Ruan should pay attention to the intensity mark, the whole paragraph is controlled in p, and the performance is very weak. It should not only control the intensity, but also be weak and not empty,

but also make a very bright tone, so as to form a contrast with the melody part, and decorate it well, creating a calm surface of this part, but also a delicate atmosphere of the heart. In section B, the melody is interwoven with the pipa and the guzheng for interpretation, while Da Ruan takes over the guzheng for bass presentation at this time, and the music material is developed based on the melody of the guzheng at the end of section A. In section C, the melody further develops and changes, and at this time, the background of Da Ruan in the bass part is also more rich, and there are complex rhythm changes such as rolling, 7 consonants, and continuous sixteenth notes. In the performance of BC, the overall intensity is stronger than that of A, mainly between mp-mf, the interpretation of roles is more in-depth, and more attention is paid to the control of timbre where the rhythm is complex. Throughout the first verse, Tai Ruan's bass plays the role of embellishment of musical color, decoration of melody and the basis of bass stability in the band's voice.

Section D of the second part (D-G), the banquet begins, and the pipa cuts in, the continuous and steady rhythm is like opening the timing hourglass, and the sound goes like seconds. Then add the melody of Xiao and Erhu, intermittently, and through repeated changes in strength, giving people a feeling of drifting. At this time, the Guzheng and Da Ruan interacted with each other to play triplets and continuous thirty-two notes. This relatively unstable rhythm participates in the melody, and produces a certain sense of dissociation and randomness with the melody of Xiao and Erhu, but the music reflects the "form dispersing and spirit not dispersing". In the performance, Darian takes the bar as the unit, and the rhythm within each bar has a certain free play space, which should be contrasted with the stable rhythm of the pipa, so as to express Liu Bei's inner unease.

In paragraph E, the composition alternates between 5/8 and 6/8. At this time, the pipa, the guzheng and the big Ruan pass through, and the two bars as a unit do the first gradually strengthening and weakening, to fix the rhythm and speed. At this point, the Big Nguyen plays the role of setting the chord bass, which continues into the F segment.

In section F, both Da Ruan and Pipa appear, and the instruments alternate and echo each other. The special fingering of Da Ruan with his left hand while rolling is used to carry out musical decoration and embellishment, which is used to express the special sound effects of the characters' inner anxious emotions.

In section G, the strong rolling at the beginning of this section plays an emotional role, accompanied by the rolling and scaling of the guzheng and pipa, the musical theme begins to appear in the Dagan part at bar 82. In this passage, it is crucial for the composer to strengthen the theme of the music through the special sound effect of the bass part of the Nguyen, so as to better introduce the theme motive. This foreshadows the emergence of the key musical theme, Cao Cao's character, in the third part. In this performance, Da Ruan pays attention to the integration of special sound effects and pipa performance to better interpret the music theme.

The third part (H-M), the climax of the whole song, shows Cao Cao and Liu Bei fighting against each other. In the musical works, the pipa, guzheng and Ruan instruments first appeared, shaping Cao Cao's musical theme. In this piece, Da Ruan always stabilizes the rhythm of the music in the band and balances the level of the music. When playing, pay attention to the strength to be firm and powerful, and the timbre is mixed thick and deep. In the whole music, it is integrated with the timbre of guzheng and pipa instruments.

The fourth part (N-O). In section N, the composer replaces the xiao and guzheng in section A, and reproduces the theme of Da Ruan's performance, which changes from climax moment to calm, and tells it with the thick and simple timbre unique to Da Ruan, thus creating a gap in the auditory space. The performance of this piece of Tai Ruan instrument is manifested in the form of playing the main instrument in the music works. It is the use of its thick and powerful bass color characteristics to depict the special music content picture. It was as if the feuds that had taken place at previous feasts had vanished in an instant, as if they had passed away. In the performance, the mood of the players should be relaxed and calm, and the timbre of Da Ruan performance should be clean, soft and lingering, giving people a sense of space.

O, the melody is again overplayed by the flute. The pipa, guzheng and Da Ruan return to the accompaniment state, in which Da Ruan is mainly supplemented by bass, which echoes the beginning and the end, giving people an infinite aftertaste. The music is about to end, pipa, Da Ruan,

guzheng, in turn appear overtones, thus extending people's hearing space again.

The composer makes extensive use of Darian to express thematic music in his compositions, enhancing the visual and emotional color of the music in this way, and closely integrating the theme of the plot. In the works, the composer choreographed changes in technique and force to depict the ups and downs of emotion. Players need to master precise control through rigorous practice and fine coordination with other instruments in the practice of chamber music to achieve emotional resonance and consistency.

3. The importance of Da Ruan in chamber music

Da Ruan plays an indispensable role in instrumental chamber music performance. In a chamber orchestra, due to the relatively small size of the configuration, each instrument has a unique and irreplaceable role, so it must show its unique expressiveness. This requires each voice not only to maintain its independence, but also to retain its unique personality characteristics.

In the modern chamber music performance by combing and summarizing, it can be roughly summarized as the following:

a) "Supporting role"

In chamber music, Da Ruan usually plays a key role as the harmonic support, bass foil, and rhythm foundation. It mainly provides support in the low voice and works in coordination with the main melody instrument or voice part to play the importance of its timbre. Although Da Ruan does not often play a leading role in the band, he appears more as a "supporting role", whose broad, grand and rich timbre can effectively deepen the melodic contrast and enhance the appeal of the work.

b) The "protagonist" role

In chamber music works, in addition to playing as a "supporting" instrument, in many musical works, it will also be played as the main instrument, appearing in the melody part, reflecting the timbre role of the main character of the big Ruan, and cooperating with other instruments to express the musical works. In addition to playing the theme melody, Tai Nguyen also uses backbone notes and major chords in his works to play the role of the main character's timbres. However, in the traditional folk band combination, Dachuan generally does not play as the main instrument in the chamber band, but often appears in the bass part, which plays the role of supporting and stabilizing the main spin.

c) The role of "embellishment"

Special timbre or sound effects that can be produced by Tai Nguyen through some playing techniques. For example, the overtone, the left hand plucked string, the clapper, etc., are used in the work, mainly to add color, render the atmosphere, and enrich the effect of sound level. In the long-term performance practice, it has been found that many traditional chamber music works are played with floral variations on the main instrument. In order to ensure the sense of hierarchy of the music works, Tai Ruan will play the reduced tone or only play the main tone according to the characteristics of the main instrument with floral variations, so as to achieve close coordination with the main instrument.

d) "Adhesive" role

Because of its unique thick and neutral timbre, Da Ruan has become the "adhesive" of the band's sound integration, playing the role of a bridge between "silk" and "bamboo". In the band, Da Ruan mainly acts as the bass part, although not the "protagonist" in the band, but plays the role of pillar and bridge in the overall work, so that the music can be presented perfectly.

e) The role of "bass part"

Da Ruan is a plucked instrument in the bass part. Because of its strong sound, it has a good overall integration in the chamber music combination and can play a good role in the bass part. It is a very important part in chamber music performance, and it plays a role in musical balance and level with the sounds of other parts. The bass is like the root note of a chord, which plays a stable role, and without the bass part, the musical work will appear empty and ethereal, lacking the core components of the music. In the national chamber music, Da Ruan mainly acts as the pillar of the

band's sound, determining the role of harmony and the basis of rhythm. Therefore, Da Ruan plays a vital role in the national instrumental chamber music.

Tai Ruan makes the music more colorful because of its unique timbre and musical expression brought by rich fingering. Whether in traditional works or modern works, as players, we should reflect the relationship between Da Ruan and the whole band in the process of playing, and clarify our timbre role in it, so that we can properly express the characteristics of Da Ruan's timbre and integrate into the whole band. With the continuous breakthrough of technical difficulty, the timbre expression of Da Ruan is also strengthened. Besides playing chord bass and arpeggios that break down chord composition, Da Ruan will also appear low melodies with high technical difficulty. Especially in the strumming combination, the composer often uses the big ruan to configure the bass part, so that the timbre of the work is fuller, the three-dimensional sense of the harmonic effect is further enhanced, and the performance space has more possibilities. It can be seen that the role of Da Ruan in chamber music has shown a more and more important trend.

The performance of Zhongda Ruan in chamber music is different from solo performance and band performance in general national orchestra. In chamber music, Darian performance has strong requirements on the individual comprehensive ability of the player, who not only needs to have skilled playing skills, but also needs to have high aesthetic ability, so as to well interpret the connotation of the work, play the necessary timbres of the music, and achieve creative coordination of sound effects [6]. For the performer, the tacit cooperation with other instrument players can make the expression of the work accurate. Due to the diversity of roles that Da Ruan plays in chamber music works, it is more important for Da Ruan players to be strict with themselves. While constantly improving their playing skills, they should take the initiative to analyze and understand the roles of various instruments in the works, so as to accurately grasp the role characteristics of Da Ruan in different passages and embody their own playing value.

4. Conclusions

Darian is an indispensable bass plucking instrument in the national chamber music, which is rich in expression, including the mining of timbre and the maturity of playing skills. Its timbre is relatively simple in traditional works, but with the joint efforts of performers and composers, modern works show diversified and personalized characteristics. Da Ruan plays a vital role in chamber music, adapting and accurately expressing a wide range of different styles of work.

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