

From the perspective of the development of art history, the value of sketching lies in that it enables artistic creation to shift from "passive following" to "active exploration", and art inheritance to change from "imitation of finished products" to "learning the essence of techniques", ultimately becoming a key link connecting different art periods and promoting continuous innovation in art.

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## IMPRESSIONISM AND ITS PRESENTATION IN DEBUSSY'S MUSICAL LANGUAGE

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The artistic direction of impressionism, which emerged in the second half of the 19th century in France, was originally associated with painting. Fleeting impressions, light effects and variability of nature have become the main themes and images of the works of representatives of this style. The principles of impressionism were further revealed in such arts as literature, music, theater. The bright representative of musical impressionism is the French composer Claude Debussy, whose creativity has become a symbol of abandoning academic canons and striving for free artistic expression. On the basis of the above, the aim of the article is to consider the main characteristics of the musical language of Claude Debussy in the context of the artistic direction of impressionism.

**Material and Methods.** The material for writing this article is the work of Chinese researchers, which reveals the features of the musical language of Claude Debussy and approaches to its analysis. Among the research methods: general (generalization, analysis), historical and cultural, biographical.

**Results and their discussion.** In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Impressionism emerged as a new art movement, first appearing in the field of painting. Historians generally consider 1874 as the starting year of this style. In that year, a group of young painters rejected from art exhibitions formed the "Salon des Rejected" in Paris and exhibited their works. These works abandoned traditional Romantic elements, focusing on outdoor natural scenes and the changing light and shadow. French art critic Louis Leroy used the word "Impression" from Monet's "Impression, Sunrise" to criticize their style, and thus the name "Impressionism" came into being.

Impressionist painting and poetry influenced music at the time on an artistic level. Claude Debussy, a leading figure in Impressionist music, did not compose "Primavera" (Spring) in 1887 with "Impressionism" as his guiding principle. In the Prix de Rome competition, his work was criticized for "lacking a rigorous structure, a direct consequence of the composer's exaggerated use of color," and he was warned against "vague Impressionism". Debussy disagreed with this assessment. In fact, a new artistic style emerged in France at that time, permeating multiple fields such as painting, poetry, and literature.

In 1894 "Impressionism" was no longer a derogatory term, and related works began to receive praise. By 1905, Impressionism and Debussy's music had merged, making his piano works typical examples of "auditory Impressionism". The essence of Impressionist aesthetics lies in dissolving "certainty", emphasizing the fluidity and subjectivity of sensory experience, and refusing to fix artistic objects within a single interpretive framework. In the realm of music, this manifests as the deconstruction of the traditional tonal system, the blurring of rhythmic patterns, and a profound exploration of timbre as an independent expressive element. Debussy, with his unique musical grammar, transformed the trembling of light and shadow in painting into subtle vibrations of sound, and sublimated the imagery in poetry into the layering of harmonic colors, thus achieving the artistic ideals of Impressionism on an auditory level.

Debussy's concretization of Impressionist aesthetics in his musical language is primarily manifested in his reconstruction of the "perception of time". He abandoned the rigorous rhythmic progression and symmetrical phrasing of Classicism, employing unevenly divided rhythms, tempo rubato, and fragmented phrase structures to simulate the irregular movement of natural phenomena (such as flowing water, breezes, and light and shadow). This approach to time weakens the narrative aspect of the music and strengthens the capture and continuation of fleeting sensations. For example, in works such as "Images", the fluidity of rhythm does not serve structural tension but rather aims to create a suspended, dreamlike sense of the passage of time, immersing the listener in a continuously changing sonic atmosphere rather than following a clear dramatic development [1].

Debussy's special approach to the achievement of impressionist aesthetics should be noted. He extensively employs non-functional harmonic progressions, such as whole-tone scales, pentatonic scales, medieval modes, and parallel progressions of superimposed chords (ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords). These harmonic materials break free from traditional resolution tendencies; their value lies primarily in their unique sonic color and sensory stimulation. For example, the use of parallel fifths and octaves, though considered taboo in traditional harmony, allows Debussy to create ethereal, hazy, or oriental-inspired sonic effects. This harmonic thinking liberates sound from the constraints of tonal logic, making it an independent "color patch," constructing an auditory scene similar to the interplay of light and color in Monet's paintings through superposition, juxtaposition, and gradation. Analysis of the nationalistic piano work "Qin Terracotta Warriors" shows that the fragmented sonic patterns and the aesthetic pursuit of "emphasizing meaning over form" are intrinsically connected to Debussy's Impressionist ideals, both emphasizing the conveyance of meaning through the suggestive rather than descriptive nature of sound [2].

Furthermore, the exploration and liberation of timbre constitutes another key support for the Impressionist aesthetics in Debussy's musical language. He greatly expanded the expressive power of the piano, treating the instrument as a "sound palette." Through meticulous touch control (such as extremely soft ppp, light touches of the fingertips, and light pressure of the palm), innovative use of pedal techniques (especially the overtone resonances created by the half pedal and tremolo pedal), and the contrastive development of different registers, Debussy simulated the mixed sounds of the harp, glockenspiel, gong, and even an orchestra on the piano. This extreme pursuit of subtle timbre aims to evoke synesthetic associations in the listener with specific scenes, light, or emotions. For example, the rapidly passing arpeggios and shimmering high-pitched patterns in "Goldfish" do not concretely depict the form of the goldfish, but rather stimulate the listener's imagery through postural sonic shapes (such as swimming, tail wagging, and the reflection of light on the water's surface). This "postural interpretation" transcends the limitations of musical notation, requiring the performer to deeply understand the connection between sonic shapes and socio-cultural context, achieving a sublimation from technical operation to aesthetic expression [1].

This leads to a key methodological principle for interpreting Debussy's works: seeking a dynamic balance between respecting historical authenticity and leveraging modern expressive power. The dual principles of "historicity" and "contemporaneity," proposed in studying the interpretation of Baroque harpsichord works on the modern piano, also apply to Debussy:

The historical principle requires performers to thoroughly study different versions of the score (paying attention to Debussy's frequent revisions), understand contemporary performance practices (such as Debussy's instructions on tempo and precise markings of pedal use), and grasp the core characteristics of the Impressionist style (such as avoiding excessive romantic emotional expression and pursuing delicate layering control). The interpretation of ornaments requires particular caution; performers must determine, based on the context of the score, whether an ornament serves as stylistic embellishment or an important expressive element. Overly adhering to the imitation of the soft volume or singular timbre of early pianos may lose its expressiveness in a modern concert hall setting, but completely ignoring its historical context will lead to stylistic distortion [3].

The principle of contemporaneity: Performers are permitted and encouraged to creatively interpret a work by combining the technical advantages of the modern piano with contemporary aesthetics, based on a deep understanding of its essence. This includes: more fully exploring the tonal potential of the modern piano to enrich the Impressionist "palette"; incorporating personal perceptions of musical fluidity into the flexible handling of tempo and dynamics (while avoiding excessive romanticization); and even, given a deep understanding of the work's cultural connotations (such as Eastern elements), integrating a broader cross-cultural perspective, as exemplified by Tan Dun's works that blend East and West, and the modern translation of traditional elements in "Qin Terracotta Warriors." Crucially, this "personalized" expression must serve the music's inherent logic and spiritual essence, rather than being merely a superficial display of technique or a pursuit of novelty.

**Conclusion.** Therefore, the performance and interpretation of Debussy's piano works is not a simple choice between "retro" and "innovation," but a complex process of "dialectical interpretation." It requires the performer to be like a "scholar and artist," possessing both a solid foundation in historical musicology, capable of penetrating the musical notation to understand its historical code, and a keen artistic intuition and superb performance skills, able to imbue the work with vibrant life in a modern context. Gadamer's theory reminds us that the meaning of music is not fixed, but is constantly generated and enriched in each specific, historical performance event. A successful interpretation of Debussy must be a dynamic and creative unity achieved through "fusion of perspectives" – between historical and contemporary viewpoints, the composer's intentions and the performer's understanding, and the musical indications and sonic realization. This lays a solid theoretical foundation for the next section's in-depth analysis of the specific elements of his musical language (texture, harmony, timbre) and its interpretive path.

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## **SICHUAN OPERA AS LIVING HERITAGE: VOCAL INTEGRATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION**

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**Keywords.** Sichuan opera, musical tradition, heritage, vocal Integration, technological transformation.

Sichuan Opera, as the most representative local opera form in Southwest China, profoundly demonstrates the inclusiveness and innovation of Bashu culture through the formation and development of its musical system. Over its more than 600-year history, Sichuan Opera music