

СЕКЦИЯ 2. ИСКУССТВО И ЛИЧНОСТЬ: НОВЫЕ СМЫСЛЫ И ГРАНИ ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЯ

ПОДСЕКЦИЯ 1.

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR A CONCERTMASTER-ACCOMPANIST

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Abstract. The article analyzes the terminology for piano accompanist describing the conceptual differences between the accompanist and collaborative pianist. The difference between a modern concertmaster and an accompanist is shown, the specialties of higher education in the named field of professional activity are described, as well as the requirements for the professional competencies of a specialist.

Keywords: accompanist, concertmaster, accompanist-concertmaster, musical education.

ОПРЕДЕЛЕНИЕ ТРЕБОВАНИЙ К ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНЫМ КОМПЕТЕНЦИЯМ КОНЦЕРТМЕЙСТЕРА-АККОМПАНИАТОРА

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Аннотация. В статье анализируется терминология в сфере наименований профессий и специальностей аккомпаниатора и концертмейстера. Показано отличие современного концертмейстера от аккомпаниатора, описаны специальности высшего образования в названной сфере профессиональной деятельности, а также требования к профессиональным компетенциям специалиста.

Ключевые слова: аккомпаниатор, концертмейстер, аккомпаниатор-концертмейстер, музыкальное образование.

In the past decades, piano performance and education in China have progressed at an impressive rate. The current educational model is imbalanced, placing too much emphasis on technical abilities while lacking in aesthetic depth. Accompaniment competence is necessary for a modern music teacher and means that the accompanist does not only rely on music score but requires broader competences such as transposing, choir directing, vocal teaching, harmonic arrangement, etc.

When we analyze the historical and theoretical aspects of teaching accompanist skills and requirements for music teachers, we first come across the controversy and inconsistency in the terminology. In the Chinese language we can find such terms as ‘piano accompaniment’ ‘collaborative piano’, or ‘piano collaboration art’. In the English musicology and art sphere such terms as accompanist, piano accompanist, pianist, collaborative artist, keyboarder, collaborative pianists are used.

Being critical of terminology confusion, Kevin T. Padworski sarcastically claims that “Accompanists are hack pianists that suck” while “Collaborative Pianists are really good accompanists” [2]. Though this definition is way too emotional, it still reflects the prevailing concept of accompanists being seen inferior and supplementary to the main performer and collaborative pianists as equal and adding to the performance as a whole.

K. T. Padrovsky elaborates that “*Accompanying* ... [is] working “for” rather than “with” a recital partner. *Collaborative piano*, on the other hand, ... implies equality, association, and teamwork” [2]. Most collaborative pianists agree that with the latter vision, the accompanist is seen as a creative professional contributing to the performance result, they not only assist but inspire and transform the performance via close collaboration during rehearsals.

In the Russian language, the terms *аккомпаниатор* and *концертмейстер* are used with the same connotation of “for” and “with” as we mentioned above, but also we can find the blend form *аккомпаниатор-концертмейстер* used for contemporary job descriptions. This fact shows that the term comprises both components of the professional competences. So, we can conclude that being a professional collaborative pianist means combining piano skills with creative personality and performance skills, as well as the skills of collaboration, communication and teamwork.

It means that the collaborative pianist should be a top-notch musician combining the skills of “a pianist, an accompanist, a vocalist, a conductor, and an educator. The accompanist is required to have good command of the piano playing technique, the ability to competently and professionally read sheet music and transpose. They must also play by ear, possess the skills of transcription and conducting, sing to their own and the author’s accompaniment, feel a partner in an ensemble with a choir or vocalist, and be able to do much more – everything that forms the basis of their professional activity” [1].

If we talk about collaborative piano as the major, it is generally offered at the postgraduate level and is divided into two directions of study: instrumental music and vocal music. That is, the cooperation between piano and instrumental music, and the cooperation between piano and vocal music. We can see the variations of major as ‘Piano performance major’ and ‘Art direction major’.

For example, in Sichuan Conservatory of Music the training objectives of the piano major are generally expressed in two general directions: it not only focuses on cultivating

high, sophisticated, and top-notch artistic talents, but also cultivates comprehensive musical talents for a variety of career needs.

The training objectives require students to have a firm and correct political direction, support the leadership of the Communist Party of China, love the socialist motherland, love the people's cultural and artistic undertakings, have a relatively complete cultural and artistic knowledge structure, a comprehensive knowledge of music theory, and solid performance skills. The need to have strong music analysis ability and certain artistic research ability, strong music performance skills and the ability to interpret musical works of different styles and genres, understand educational theories and rules, and have the ability to teach piano and organize music tutoring and training [4].

As a practical and comprehensive professional skill, piano art guidance has a wide range of needs in music, performance and other fields. The art direction major, in its turn, cultivates students' professional performance skills and artistic accomplishment focusing on students' cognition, interpretation and research levels in the professional field. It helps students to master the performance methods and artistic characteristics of various piano works of different historical periods, different styles and genres, and different composers.

They master the skills of solo, accompaniment, and ensemble piano playing; they have the ability to perform and to teach. The conservatory enables them to have a high professional level, be able to work in professional art centers, professional or comprehensive colleges and universities, primary and secondary schools, to become artistic talents who can engage in related professional work such as solo, ensemble, accompaniment, teaching and academic research [6].

In his article on "Construction of Piano Accompaniment Teaching Platform" Yifan Yuan claims that "in the teaching piano accompaniment course in college, we should adapt to the development of time, constantly reform the teaching concept, teach students according to their aptitude ... Only in this way can we effectively improve the piano performance level in universities, cultivate a group of outstanding musical talents and make greater contributions to our music education" [3].

So, we can say, that at the present time there is a need to implement collaborative pianist education into undergraduate programs for music professionals. According to the college and university "Teaching guidance outline for compulsory courses for Musicology (Teacher Education)", piano is a compulsory course for the undergraduate major of musicology (teacher education) in ordinary colleges and universities. It is the basis for learning various music-related courses and is directly linked to the classroom teaching and extracurricular music activities of basic music education. It is an important way to train students to engage in a core course on the basic competencies of music education. This course integrates knowledge, skills, artistry and practice, and plays an important role in improving students' overall quality and developing students' musical talents [5].

The learning outcomes for a graduate accompanist and collaborative pianist are as follows. In the level of knowledge, they need to understand the development and evolution of the piano, know a brief history of the development of piano art, and the basic theories and knowledge of piano performance.

In the level of skills, they need to master the basic methods and performance skills of piano playing, be able to play moderately advanced music and accompaniments, and focus on cultivating the ability to accompany songs. Combined with vocal skills, they need to have the ability to play and sing by themselves. At the level of competences, they need to be able to understand, analyze, and appreciate the characteristics of piano music works and performance styles, and accurately represent piano music works. The students need to be competent in basic piano teaching, and be able to tutor extracurricular music activities in primary and secondary schools [5].

So, after analyzing the key terminology, university and college majors and competency requirements, we can conclude that while the term piano accompanying has traditionally implied inferiority, subservience, working “for” rather than “with” a recital partner, collaborative piano performance means much more than accompaniment. This implies equality, association, and teamwork.

A collaborative pianist is a modern level, state-of-the-art music professional that possesses top-notch piano skills, vocal skills, collaboration and creativity skills, choir directing and teaching skills. They should be able to collaborate with vocalists, choirs, orchestral players to hold high-level concerts, and be competent in collaborative piano performance work in first-class domestic and foreign competitions, domestic and foreign universities and first-class performance groups. So, it is necessary to study the pedagogical conditions for improving piano accompaniment and collaborative piano skills in future music teachers.

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