

THE EXTRA-MUSICAL ELEMENTS INVOLVED IN ACHIEVING A SUCCESSFUL
PUBLIC PIANO RECITAL

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DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to help piano players achieve a successful recital by analyzing extra-musical elements. By combining my live piano performance experience with an analysis of popular pianists' live performance videos as well as authoritative scientific evidence, I provide musicians with a comprehensive and useful handbook to help and guide them towards a higher concert quality and success. In this study, I discuss the non-musical elements in chronological order spanning from pre-performance preparation to the actual piano performance, and extends to post-performance considerations. The pre-performance section encompasses psychological and dietary aspects that aid in preparing the piano player for their performance. During the performance, a broad range of elements including psychological and physical aspects, are discussed. In addition, I conduct a detailed analysis and comparison of live recital videos featuring world-renowned pianists, aiming to extract and summarize the essential extra-musical elements of achieving a successful piano recital.

Finally, I discuss the interaction with the audience during the performance and post-performance to better understand how this contributes to the success of a live concert. I include convincing scientific evidence to support each point. I found that these extra-musical elements in pre-performance, during performance, and post-performance all contribute to a successful piano recital.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MPAMusic Performance Anxiety

IZOFIndividual Zones of Optimal Functioning

1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, public piano recitals and concerts occur in various venues, at different times, and for different purposes and audiences. Increasingly, pianists are becoming more competitive toward achieving successful public live piano performances. Live piano performances for the general public date back to the mid-19th century. On June 9th, 1840, Hungarian pianist and composer Franz Liszt pioneered the world's first live piano recital in London, which was advertised as "Liszt's Pianoforte Recitals". Liszt changed the nature of the concert by including several extra-musical elements: 1) he interacted with the audience during the performance; 2) he performed the whole program from memory; 3) he positioned the piano at a right angle to the audience with the lid up to deliver a better sound and to show the pianist's right profile to the audience, enhancing their view of the performer; and 4) he entered the stage from the wing of the concert hall.¹

There are many subjective and objective elements that need to be considered and discussed that influence the success of a live piano performance. The purpose of this research is to explore these extra-musical elements and to provide many-faceted guidance to help piano players achieve a successful live public concert.

Chapter Two discusses elements preceding a piano performance. This includes mental and physical preparation to help pianists be ready to perform successfully on stage.

Chapter Three centers on the physical aspect during the recital. It consists of diverse elements ranging from pianists' etiquette and physical movement to facial expression, interwoven with the aesthetic considerations in presenting an impressive piano recital. An

¹ Arthur Friedheim, *Life and Liszt: The recollections of a concert pianist* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2013), 12.

analysis and comparison of different pianists' live public performance videos was conducted to examine the physical elements of presenting a successful live piano concert.

Chapter Four focuses on the psychological elements in play during the performance, exploring mental states such as anxiety, excitement, and stress as well as positive approaches to these different mental states.

Chapter Five pays attention to unexpected situations during the piano performance, including examples of various mistakes such as wrong notes, chaotic tempo, blur music phrases, and memory slips. These are reviewed with the aim of helping piano performers deal with such problems in order to achieve a successful live concert.

Chapter Six explores interaction between the pianist and the audience and addresses the considerations involved in speaking from the stage during the recital.

Chapter Seven talks addresses the possibility of an encore at the end of a piano concert as well as considerations in choosing repertoire for an encore, while Chapter Eight concludes by summarizing all of the extra-musical elements involved in presenting a successful public piano recital.

2. PRE-PERFORMANCE PREPARATION

To achieve success and freedom on stage, it is crucial not to underestimate the significance of pre-performance preparation. This is because the preparation undertaken beforehand plays a substantial role in shaping one's future performance. Extensive research has been conducted to examine the extra-musical elements that musicians can incorporate into their pre-performance routines. In this guide, I will explore each of these non-musical elements that have proven helpful, drawing from both my personal experience as well as extensive research, to assist pianists in preparing for a successful public concert.

2.1. Sleep

The first aspect I would like to discuss is the importance of getting enough sleep. It is known that approximately “one-third of a person's life is spent sleeping.”² Sleep occupies a significant portion of our lives and plays a crucial role in the career development of pianists.

Pianists require various qualities such as endurance, concentration, strength, and energy, both physically and mentally. After a long day of practice, fatigue can significantly impact a pianist's mental state and physical well-being. Scientific studies have shown that prolonged and exhausting piano practice can lead to forearm muscle fatigue and negatively affect musical performance.³ In such cases, adequate sleep and rest are vital for pianists to relax, recover, and prepare themselves for a new day of work. Personally, I have noticed that when I get enough sleep, my brain feels more refreshed compared to periods of insufficient sleep.

² Stefan B. Gingerich, Erin LD Seaverson, and David R. Anderson, “Association between sleep and productivity loss among 598 676 employees from multiple industries,” *American Journal of Health Promotion* 32, no. 4 (2018), 1092.

³ Johnson, David, Isabelle Dufour, Daniela Damian, and George Tzanetakis, “Detecting pianist hand posture mistakes for virtual piano tutoring In Proceedings of the international computer music conference,” 168.

Research has consistently demonstrated that sleep enhances the consolidation of memory. While we sleep, our brains continue to function and process the information we learned throughout the day and in the past.⁴ Therefore, I would recommend that pianists aim for at least seven hours of sleep per night. An article published in the American Journal of Health Promotion investigated the relationship between sleep duration and productivity by surveying 598,676 employed adults under the age of 65 from various industries. The study found that around 8 hours of sleep is beneficial for an adult's productivity, as it reduces absences, presenteeism, and fatigue.⁵

Furthermore, sleep not only helps pianists refresh their minds and improve concentration but also enhances their piano performance. An experiment conducted by Simmons and Duke in 2006 demonstrated a significant improvement in performing accuracy among participants who were part of a sleep group compared to a non-sleep group. Additionally, sleep has been found to enhance the speed of executing complex motor skills to a certain extent.⁶

2.2. Building a positive attitude and mindset

There is extensive research on the topic of cultivating confidence and a positive mindset for optimal performance. Humans have evolved with a negativity bias, as our ancestors needed to be cautious of threats in order to survive. As a result, our minds tend to focus more on negative aspects than positive ones.⁷ In the realm of music, many professional musicians and an

⁴ Göder, Robert, Anna Graf, Felix Ballhausen, Sara Weinhold, Paul Christian Baier, Klaus Junghanns, and Alexander Prehn-Kristensen, "Impairment of Sleep-Related Memory Consolidation in Schizophrenia: Relevance of Sleep Spindles?" *Sleep Medicine*, 565.

⁵ Stefan B. et al., "Association between sleep and productivity," 1091.

⁶ Amy L. Simmons, and Robert A. Duke, "Effects of sleep on performance of a keyboard melody," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 54, no. 3 (2006), 257.

⁷ Rick. Hanson, Richard Mendius: Buddha's Brain, The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love, and Wisdom (United States: New Harbinger Publications, 2009), 20.

increasing number of music students experience anxiety, pressure, and stress before performances.⁸ For pianists, confidence and a positive attitude are crucial elements for achieving successful performances. In a study conducted by McPherson and McCormick, it was found that self-confidence is an important predictor of achievement in graduate music performances.⁹

In light of these findings, it is essential for pianists to practice and cultivate a positive attitude and mindset before their performances. Drawing from my personal experience, prior to each performance I often feel the pressure and apprehension associated with a challenging recital program. My mood tends to be down and upset and my mind becomes inundated with negative thoughts. For instance, I find myself contemplating worst-case scenarios, such as making mistakes on stage or forgetting my music and freezing in front of the audience. These internal conversations naturally arise under the pressure of an upcoming performance.

To address these challenges, I propose a set of steps that can help pianists alleviate stress, eliminate negative feelings and thoughts, and ultimately build a positive attitude and mindset before significant public performances. These steps include:

1. Realize
2. Release
3. Accept
4. Transition

The first step toward cultivating a positive attitude and mindset is to realize and acknowledge the presence of negative thoughts arising in one's mind. Pianists should understand

⁸ V. J. Tief & P. Gröpel, "Pre-performance routines for music students: An experimental pilot study," *Psychology of Music*, 1263.

⁹ Gary E. McPherson, and John McCormick, "Self-Efficacy and Music Performance" *Psychology of Music* 34, no. 3 (2006), 38.

that it is normal and understandable to experience such thoughts. Negative thoughts often emerge because pianists feel responsible to their audience, strive to deliver their best performance, and bear the pressure of presenting a successful concert to the public.

Once these negative thoughts are identified, the next step is to release stress and break free from frustrated emotions. There are various coping mechanisms individuals can employ such as physical exercise, hobbies and activities, seeking social support, planning, and exercising effective time management and prioritization.

Engaging in physical activities triggers the release of endorphins, which are natural mood enhancers. Exercise can include activities like walking, jogging, dancing, or any form of movement that suits one's preference.

Finding solace in hobbies and activities that bring joy and relaxation can be an effective way to release stress. Such activities could involve listening to music, playing games, reading, painting, or engaging in other enjoyable activities that help divert your attention from stressors.

Talking to trusted friends, family members, or seeking support from a therapist can provide emotional relief. Sharing your thoughts and feelings with others who can offer understanding and empathy can help alleviate stress.

Writing down your thoughts, concerns, and tasks can help organize your mind and create a sense of structure. Breaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps and setting priorities can help reduce feelings of being overwhelmed and provide a clearer path forward.

Effectively managing your time and setting priorities can contribute to stress reduction. This involves identifying important tasks, creating a schedule, and allocating time for each activity. This approach can increase productivity and create a sense of control over one's daily responsibilities.

Personally, I have adopted two strategies. First, crying serves as a straightforward method for releasing stress. An article titled "Tears: Symbol of Healing Towards Individuation" suggests that tears shed due to stress contain stress hormones and other chemicals that aid in toxin release and stress reduction.¹⁰ Second, communication serves as another means of relieving pressure. Sharing negative thoughts and feelings with someone else not only helps to release stress from one's mind but also provides mental support, solace, and potential suggestions.

However, it is important to note that stress and pressure may not always dissipate easily. They tend to persist until the performance concludes. Therefore, the third step is crucial, which involves accepting and embracing those negative thoughts. Rather than fighting against them, it is essential to recognize and acknowledge these emotions, allowing them to coexist peacefully. By accepting our negative emotions, we can prevent them from becoming distracting factors and focus better on the technical and musical aspects of the piano performance.

When it comes to the final step of transitioning to a positive attitude and mindset, positive self-suggestion proves to be beneficial. Repeating phrases such as "I can do it" or "I trust myself" can contribute to a more positive mindset. Regardless of what happens on stage, affirming self-acceptance and self-love is crucial. Preparing for the worst while giving our best effort can be a helpful mantra. Positive affirmations have been found to impact individuals' reward system and future orientation, ultimately influencing subjective success.¹¹ To quote the English intellectual

¹⁰ Sung Eun Kyoung: Tears: Symbol of Healing towards the Individuation (e-Jsst.org, 2015), 32.

¹¹ Christopher N. Cascio, Francis J. Matthew Brook O'Donnell, Matthew D. Tinney, Shelley E. Lieberman, Victor J. Taylor, Strecher, and Emily B. Falk, "Self-Affirmation Activates Brain Systems Associated with Self-Related Processing and Reward and Is Reinforced by Future Orientation," *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* 11, no. 4 (2015), 627.

and poet John Milton, "The mind is its own place, and in itself, can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."¹²

By following these steps and incorporating positive affirmations, pianists can effectively release stress, eliminate negative feelings and thoughts, and establish a positive attitude and mindset before their performances.

2.3. The dress rehearsal: trying the piano in the concert hall and making adjustments accordingly

The dress rehearsal serves as the final comprehensive activity before a formal performance, allowing the pianist to perform potentially their entire repertoire in the designated venue.¹³ While dress rehearsals are typically not open to the public, the performer may invite a small number of individuals, including teachers, family, and friends, to provide feedback before the actual recital. This rehearsal offers an excellent opportunity for the pianist to familiarize themselves with the concert hall and piano and to make any necessary adjustments.

In most cases, pianists spend their practice time in small rooms and become familiar with the sounds, lighting, smells, and atmospheres of those spaces. However, the performance venue and piano differ from these practice settings. Therefore, it is important to consider the following suggestions for a dress rehearsal:

Performing shoes: wear the shoes intended for the performance during the dress rehearsal. This allows the pianist to become accustomed to the feel of the pedals in the concert shoes as well as the experience of walking onstage.

¹² J. McCormick, & G. McPherson, "The Role of Self-Efficacy in a Musical Performance Examination: An Exploratory Structural Equation Analysis" *Psychology of Music*, 31, 37.

¹³ Joseph Church: *Music Direction for the Stage: A View from the Podium* (Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2015), 244.

Stage presence: walk on and off the stage during the dress rehearsal as if it were a public performance. This helps in developing a sense of familiarity and confidence in the performance space.

Repertoire run-through: perform the entire repertoire during the dress rehearsal while paying attention to the piano's keyboard. Simultaneously, focus on elements such as sound projection, tonal colors, dynamics, articulations, and resonance. This helps in adjusting and refining the performance.

Recording and evaluation: record the entire dress rehearsal and watch the performance afterward. This allows for self-evaluation and adjustment based on observations. Additionally, seek feedback from others who have watched the recording to gain valuable insights.

Furthermore, it is important for pianists to consider environmental factors that may impact their performance. Here are some considerations to keep in mind:

Acoustics: familiarize oneself with the acoustics of the venue and adjust playing technique and dynamics accordingly. Experiment with touch, pedal usage, and volume to achieve the desired sound based on the venue's characteristics.

Noise and distractions: identify potential sources of noise or distractions in the performance space, such as HVAC noises, and take measures to minimize their impact. Communicate with venue staff to address concerns and find solutions, such as reducing external noises or ensuring a quiet backstage area. Maintain mental focus and concentration through techniques like mindfulness or visualization.

Lighting: pay attention to the lighting conditions on the stage, as poor lighting and shadows can affect reading sheet music or seeing the piano keys. Discuss lighting requirements with venue staff to ensure proper visibility and consider the desired stage effect.

Stage layout and ergonomics: take into account the stage layout and piano placement before the performance. Assess the piano position and make necessary adjustments. Ensure that the piano bench is at the appropriate height and comfortable for extended playing.

Personal preparation: practice adaptability and flexibility in different environments. Rehearse in various venues to become comfortable with adjusting to different acoustic conditions. Stay mentally and physically prepared by engaging in warm-up exercises to warm up fingers and practicing relaxation techniques to manage performance anxiety. Experiencing diverse performance environments can enhance pianists' ability to adjust and deliver a successful live performance despite environmental factors.

By incorporating these strategies and maintaining a positive mindset, pianists can approach their dress rehearsal and subsequent performances with confidence and poise. The dress rehearsal serves as a crucial stepping stone toward achieving a polished and memorable performance that captivates both the audience and the pianist themselves.

2.4. Pre-performance diet

The saying "you are what you eat" holds true significance in our lives as diet plays a fundamental role in influencing our overall well-being. Abraham Maslow's concept of "Maslow's hierarchy of needs" illustrates the importance of food as a foundational element for achieving self-actualization (see Figure 1).¹⁴

¹⁴ Saul McLeod, "Maslow's hierarchy of needs," *Simply psychology* 1, (2007), 3.

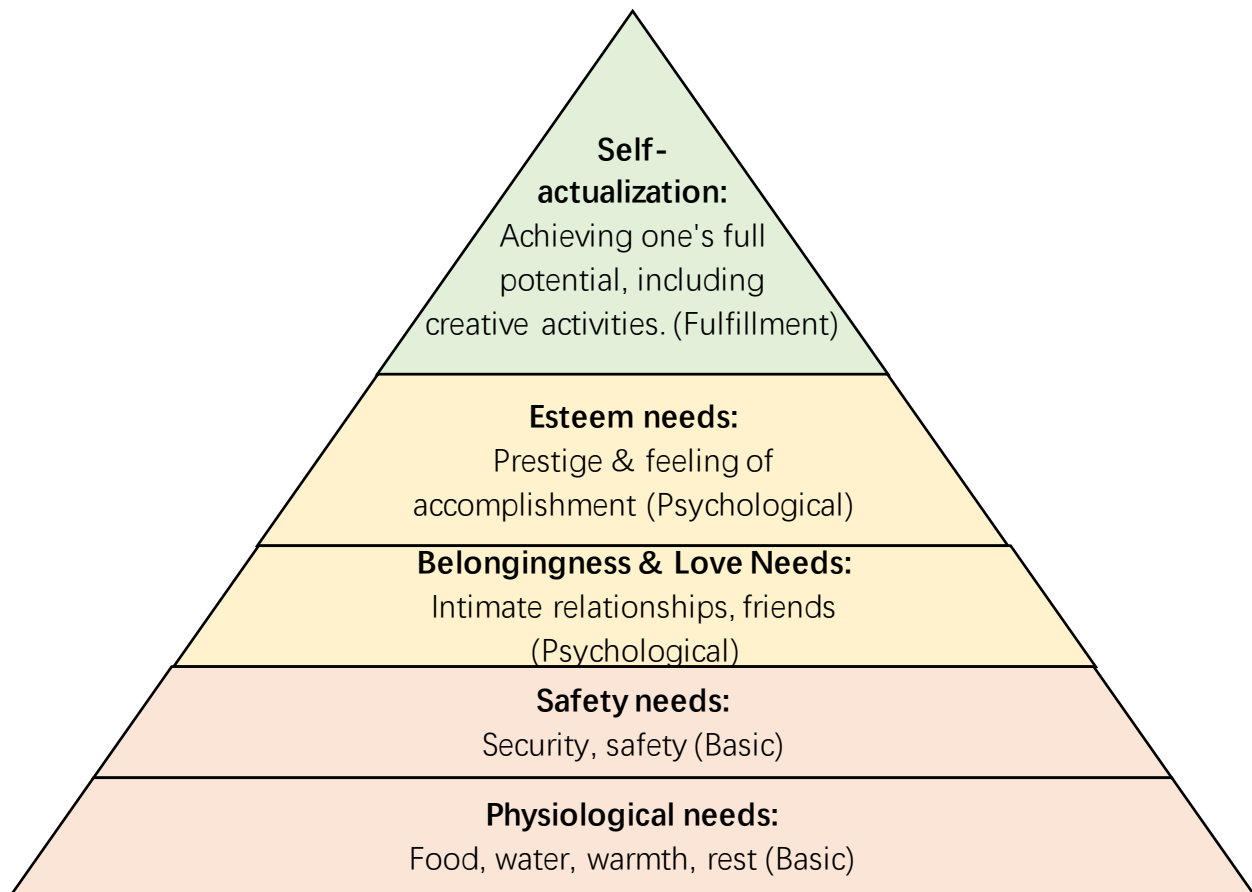


Figure 1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Physiological and safety needs are the basic needs that form the base of the pyramid. Psychological needs are in the middle of the pyramid, and self-fulfillment needs are at the top. (Adapted from McLeod, Saul. "Maslow's hierarchy of needs." *Simply psychology* 1, no. 1 (2007): 3.)

Food serves as the fuel that propels us forward, especially for pianists who require endurance and mental acuity. Just as cars rely on fuel to navigate challenging terrains, a pianist's diet enables them to tackle virtuosic passages, memorize complex sections, and perform with enthusiasm and passion. Extensive research has demonstrated the impact of diet on both physical and mental aspects of human health.¹⁵

When it comes to choosing the right foods before an important public performance to alleviate anxiety and ensure a successful recital, I can combine my own personal experiences

¹⁵ Rebecca A. Clay, "The Link between Food and Mental Health," *American Psychological Association* (2017), 27.

with documented food guidance. For instance, consuming a banana before performing has helped many individuals, including myself, to achieve a sense of calmness. Scientific research supports this observation, suggesting that bananas contain beta-blockers that inhibit the combination of adrenaline and beta receptors, leading to reduced nerve impulses, lower heart rate, and a calmer mind.¹⁶

Another food recommendation is dark chocolate, which has been found to induce excitement, contentment, energy, and focus during piano practice and performance. Scientific evidence suggests that dark chocolate can improve brain oxygen levels, enhance blood flow, and optimize nerve function.¹⁷

Harvard Health Publishing's article on "Nutritional strategies to ease anxiety" highlights additional foods that can help reduce anxiety levels. These include magnesium-rich foods like spinach, whole grains, nuts, and seeds; zinc-rich foods such as cashews, liver, oysters, and beef; omega-3 fatty acid sources like fatty salmon, walnuts, and seeds that alleviate anxiety and improve depression; probiotic foods like sauerkraut and pickles, believed to reduce anxiety; and B vitamin-containing foods like almonds and avocado.¹⁸

It is recommended for pianists to adopt a healthy and balanced diet on a daily basis, incorporating a variety of fruits, proteins, vegetables, and other essential nutrients. Carbohydrates are particularly important for sustaining energy, attention, and focus. Following the dietary guidelines suggested by the Mayo Clinic can also contribute to managing anxiety effectively, including eating a protein-rich breakfast, consuming complex carbohydrates, staying

¹⁶ Ibid., 30.

¹⁷ Ibid., 45.

¹⁸ Uma Naidoo, "Nutritional strategies to ease anxiety" *Harvard Health Publishing* (2019), 3.

adequately hydrated, limiting or avoiding alcohol and caffeine, being mindful of food sensitivities, and striving for balanced and nutritious meals.¹⁹

Understanding the impact of diet on anxiety levels and performance can empower pianists to make informed choices regarding their food intake. By incorporating anxiety-reducing foods and adhering to healthy dietary guidelines, pianists can optimize their physical and mental well-being, ultimately enhancing their musical performances.

2.5. Dress up

It is important for pianists to dress appropriately for public performances in order to show respect to the audience and the music. When dressing for a formal concert, pianists strive to present a polished appearance because the dress choices of pianists play a significant role in their performance style, stage presence, and artistic persona. Additionally, cultural considerations also influence attire selection. It is worth noting that the specific attire for piano performances may vary depending on factors such as the venue, occasion, cultural norms, individual preferences, and the repertoire being performed. The general principles outlined below aim to provide guidance for pianists. Ultimately, feeling comfortable and confident in the chosen attire is paramount, as it allows the pianist to focus on delivering their best performance.

For formal concerts, pianists often opt for a sophisticated and professional look. This may include a dark suit or tuxedo. A classic option is a black suit, although a dark navy or charcoal suit can also be suitable. Pairing the suit with a clean, crisp white dress shirt is an attractive and traditional option. It is often advisable to avoid shirts with distracting patterns or prints.

Traditionally, a bow tie that complements the suit's color is can be chosen. However, if a bow tie

¹⁹ J. Firth, J. E. Gangwisch, A. Borisini, R. E. Wootton, & E. A. Mayer, "Food and mood: how do diet and nutrition affect mental wellbeing?" *BMJ Clinical research ed.*, 369.

is not preferred, a necktie can be a suitable alternative. Dress shoes that are well-polished and in good condition complete the ensemble. Sneakers or casual shoes should generally be avoided.

Additional options include elegant dresses, skirts, blouses, or pantsuits. When selecting an outfit, it is important to consider personal style, comfort, and the atmosphere of the concert. For formal performances, a long, flowing dress can create a beautiful look while playing the piano. It is crucial to ensure that the clothing allows for free movement, particularly during technically challenging passages. Tight or constricting dresses or skirts should be avoided. When it comes to shoes, selecting comfortable footwear that allows for easy control of the piano pedals is essential. While heels can add elegance, they should not be excessively high to avoid hindering pedal adjustments. Simple accessories like necklaces or earrings can be considered, but it is often best to avoid anything flashy or distracting. The way a pianist dresses can have a subtle but meaningful influence on their piano performance. Here are a few ways in which dress can impact a pianist's performance:

Dressing in attire that makes a pianist feel confident and comfortable can positively affect their overall performance. When a pianist feels good about their appearance it can boost their self-assurance and contribute to a more confident stage presence. Confidence can translate into a more focused and engaging performance.

Wearing appropriate and professional attire conveys a sense of professionalism and respect for the audience and the music. It helps establish a formal and serious atmosphere, particularly in formal concert settings. This professionalism can enhance the audience's perception of the pianist's skill and dedication.

Choosing clothing that allows for ease of movement and comfort is crucial for piano performance. Pianists need freedom of arm and hand movement to navigate the keyboard

effectively. Restrictive or uncomfortable clothing can hinder their ability to play with fluidity and accuracy. Opting for comfortable attire ensures that physical constraints do not interfere with the pianist's technical execution.

The visual aspect of a performance plays a role in engaging the audience. The attire worn by a pianist can enhance their stage presence and captivate the audience's attention. An elegant and appropriate outfit can complement the music being performed and contribute to a more visually appealing experience for the audience.

The choice of attire can also help establish a connection between the pianist, the music, and the overall atmosphere of the performance. The color, style, and formality of the clothing can align with the mood and character of the music being played. This synchronization between the visual and auditory elements can create a more cohesive and immersive performance for the audience.

While the impact of dress on piano performance may be subtle, it remains an important factor in the overall presentation and experience. By choosing appropriate, comfortable, and confidence-boosting attire, pianists can create an environment that allows them to fully express themselves and deliver their best performance.

Here are a few examples of famous pianists and their dress choices along with the potential impact of the dress on their performances:

Lang Lang, a renowned Chinese pianist, is known for his dynamic and expressive playing style. He often dresses in stylish and modern attire that reflects his energetic stage presence. For instance, he often wears traditional Chinese clothing in public performance. His fashion-forward choices align with his charismatic performances, adding to the overall visual impact and connecting with younger audiences.

Martha Argerich, an Argentinean pianist, is celebrated for her powerful and emotive playing. She often opts for elegant and classic attire, typically wearing sophisticated dresses or pantsuits. Her refined dress style complements her artistry, conveying a sense of grace and poise that resonates with her mature interpretations.

Yuja Wang, a Chinese pianist, is known for her virtuosic technique and daring performances. She often pushes the boundaries with her dress choices, opting for bold and eye-catching outfits. This approach creates a strong visual impact that mirrors her bold and adventurous musical interpretations, sparking conversations and capturing attention.

Glenn Gould, a Canadian pianist, was recognized for his unique and idiosyncratic approach to piano performance. He famously wore rumpled, untucked shirts and sweaters during his concerts. His unconventional dress style matched his unconventional interpretations and helped cultivate his distinct persona as a nonconformist musician.

Mitsuko Uchida, a Japanese-British pianist, is celebrated for her insightful and delicate interpretations of classical repertoire. She often chooses understated and elegant dresses for her performances. Her refined and sophisticated attire aligns with her meticulous attention to detail and musical sensitivity, enhancing the audience's perception of her artistry.

These examples demonstrate how the dress choices of famous pianists can align with their performance style, stage presence, and artistic persona. Their attire, whether it is modern, classic, daring, or understated, contributes to the overall impact of their performances and helps establish a visual connection with the audience.

We can see, additionally, that performance attire may vary between different cultures. For example, in China, some male pianists will wear a Zhongshan Fu, a type of traditional Chinese attire popularized by Sun Yat-sen, a revolutionary leader and the founding father of the

Republic of China. It is also known as the Zhongshan suit or Mao suit and it has a distinct style that has become a symbol of Chinese nationalism and identity. The Zhongshan Fu typically consists of a jacket with a Mandarin collar, four pockets, and matching pants. The jacket usually has four or five buttons and the collar can be worn up or down. The color of the suit is usually dark blue or gray, but it can also be black or green. The Zhongshan Fu was designed to be a practical and functional outfit that could be worn for both formal and casual occasions. It became popular among Chinese politicians and officials in the early 20th century, and it remains a popular choice for special occasions and formal events in China today.²⁰

Female pianists in China have at times elected to wear a Qipao for public piano performances. The Qipao is a traditional Chinese dress that originated in the 1920s and became popular in the 1930s. In Cantonese it is also known as the Cheongsam. The Qipao is a form-fitting dress that features a high collar, a form-fitting bodice, and a skirt that typically reaches to the knees. Traditionally, the Qipao was made from silk or cotton and was worn by women in the imperial court and upper-class society. The dress was designed to show off a woman's curves while still maintaining a sense of modesty, with the high collar and long sleeves covering much of the body.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the Qipao became a symbol of modernity and sophistication in China, as it was worn by actresses, socialites, and other fashionable women. The dress was adapted to incorporate Western fashion trends such as shorter hemlines and more form-fitting designs. Today, the Qipao remains a popular fashion choice for special occasions and formal events in China and other parts of the world. It has been adapted and modernized over the years

²⁰ Yongming Li: *Symbological interpretation of the costume information in the new China for the past 60 years* (2012), 80.

with variations in color, fabric, and design. Many women choose to wear the Qipao as a way of celebrating their Chinese heritage and culture.²¹

Lastly, it is worth discussing the impact of changing attire or keeping the same attire between different recitals:

Changing attire for each recital adds visual interest and variety to the concert. It can help engage the audience visually and create a sense of freshness and excitement. Different dress can complement the specific mood or theme of each performance, enhancing the overall experience for the audience.

Changing attire between recitals can convey a sense of professionalism and attention to detail. It shows that the performer has taken the time and effort to present themselves in a polished and well-prepared manner for each specific performance. This attention to detail can enhance the audience's perception of the pianist's dedication and commitment to their craft.

On the other hand, keeping the same attire for different recitals can contribute to a consistent visual identity or branding for the pianist. This can help the audience recognize and associate the performer with a specific style or image. It creates a sense of familiarity and can reinforce the pianist's personal brand, making them more memorable to the audience. Some pianists may choose to keep the attire consistent to minimize distractions and ensure that the focus remains on the music. By eliminating the visual changes, the audience can concentrate more on the pianist's performance and the emotional journey conveyed through the music.

Overall, the impact on the audience will vary based on their individual perceptions and preferences. Some audience members may appreciate the visual variety and attention to detail of

²¹ Jing Guo, "Aesthetic Characteristics of Shanghai Qipao in Chinese women's dress culture," *In International Conference on Education, Language, Art, and Intercultural Communication*, (2014), 510.

changing attire for each performance, while others may find consistent attire more visually cohesive or conducive to focusing on the music. The key is to consider the general effect and balance between engaging the audience visually and maintaining professionalism and artistic expression.

In conclusion, it is important for pianists to choose clothing that is comfortable, professional, and allows them to focus on their performance. It is often advisable to avoid anything too distracting or flashy and to make use of clothing that encourages freedom and comfort at the piano.

2.6. Warm up

Warming up before a piano recital is of utmost importance as it can significantly contribute to a successful performance. Here are the key reasons why warming up is crucial and how it can lead to a successful recital:

Warming up prepares the pianist's body for the physical demands of playing. It helps to loosen up the muscles, improve blood circulation, and increase flexibility in the fingers, hands, and arms.²² By engaging in finger exercises, scales, and arpeggios, the pianist warms up the muscles involved in piano playing, enhancing their agility and control. This physical readiness allows for more precise and effortless execution of technique during the recital.

However, warming up goes beyond physical preparation: it also nurtures mental focus and concentration.²³ Relaxation exercises, deep breathing, and moments of mindfulness can help calm the mind and reduce nervousness and performance anxiety. These mental steps allow the

²² A. N. S. O. N. Ka-Lik Sin, "Stretching Exercises from Chinese Martial Arts and Preconditioning Piano Exercises with Scores and Video Demonstrations to Prepare Pianists for Practice and Performance Without Physical Tension," (2021), 17.

²³ Ibid., 20.

pianist to be fully present during the recital, promoting better focus, musical expression, and emotional connection with the audience.

Furthermore, warm-up exercises such as scales and arpeggios allow pianists to refine their technique before the performance. Playing scales slowly and evenly helps to improve finger independence, coordination, and evenness across the keyboard. Similarly, practicing arpeggios aids in finger dexterity, hand positioning, and the development of a consistent and balanced sound. A well-honed technique acquired through warming up translates into a more polished and controlled performance.

Warming up in a suitable venue, such as a practice room or performance hall, helps pianists become attuned to acoustic considerations. By playing in different venues and adjusting to the sound and resonance, pianists can make necessary tonal and dynamic adjustments during their warm-up. Attention to the venue's acoustic characteristics contributes to a more confident and nuanced performance.

A combination of physical preparedness, mental focus, refined technique, and familiarity with the venue leads to increased confidence. Warming up instills a sense of readiness, assurance, and control, helping pianists approach the recital with confidence and poise. This confidence positively impacts their stage presence, interpretation, and ability to connect with the audience, ultimately resulting in a more successful and captivating performance. Warming up before a piano recital is vital for both physical and mental preparedness. It refines technique, enhances focus, familiarizes pianists with the venue, and instills confidence. By prioritizing warm-up exercises and rituals, pianists set the stage for a successful recital, allowing their skills, emotions, and musicality to shine.

Here are some practical tips for pianists to keep in mind when warming up before a recital:

Allocate an appropriate amount of time for warming up before the recital. This will vary depending on individual preferences and needs, but one should generally aim for at least 20-30 minutes to adequately prepare the body and mind.

Begin warm-up with gentle exercises and gradually increase the intensity. Start with slow and simple finger exercises, then progress to scales, arpeggios, and more complex technical passages. This gradual approach allows the muscles and joints to warm up without straining or risking injury.²⁴

During warm-up, maintain a mindful and focused approach. Concentrate on the technique, hand positioning, and the quality of sound. Be present in the moment and pay attention to every note. This helps establish a strong connection between the pianists' mind and fingers, enhancing overall performance.

While technical exercises are important, don't forget to include musical elements in the warm-up routine. Play through musical or lyrical sections or passages of the repertoire. This helps pianists mentally prepare for the specific music they will be presenting and allows for an easier transition into the performance itself.

Identify any particularly challenging or difficult passages in the repertoire and spend extra time warming up on those sections. Slowly and carefully practice these passages to ensure accuracy, control, and ease of execution during the recital.

²⁴ Ibid., 24.

Recall again that warm-up is not just about physical exercises. Take a few moments to calm the mind and reduce nervousness or performance anxiety. Engage in deep breathing exercises, visualization techniques, or positive affirmations to help center the focus and establish a confident mindset.

If possible, warm up in a space that replicates the acoustics of the performance venue. This can be a practice room with similar sound characteristics or, ideally, the actual performance hall itself. Familiarize yourself with the sound, resonance, and dynamics of the space to adjust your playing accordingly.

Maintain energy and remember not to overhydrate during the warm-up. Drink less water to keep your focus undistracted during the upcoming lengthy performance time. Additionally, have a light snack or meal a couple of hours before the recital to sustain your energy levels while avoiding overeating, which can divert blood away from the brain.

While it is essential to warm up adequately, be cautious not to overexert during the warm-up session. Straining the muscles or experiencing fatigue beforehand can negatively impact the piano performance. Find a balance between warming up effectively and conserving energy for the recital itself.

During warm up, actively listen to the sound. Pay attention to dynamics, phrasing, and overall musicality. Use this time to make adjustments and fine-tune the interpretation before stepping onto the stage.

In conclusion, warming up is not only about physical preparation but also about mental focus and readiness. By following these tips and establishing a consistent warm-up routine, pianists will be better equipped to deliver a confident, controlled, and successful recital.

2.7. Relaxation tips right before the performance

Here are some relaxation tips specifically for the moment before going onstage:

Playing the piano in front of others can be an effective way to release anxiety right before a recital. It can provide an opportunity to acclimate to the performance environment, build confidence, and reduce anxiety through exposure.

Find a quiet space backstage or in a practice room and take a few moments of silence. Close the eyes, take deep breaths, and focus on calming the mind and body.

Perform some gentle stretching exercises to release tension in the muscles. Focus on the fingers, wrists, arms, and shoulders. This can help relax the body and prepare it for the performance.

Play through some warm-up exercises or scales in the air or on a table to loosen up the fingers and get into a musical mindset. This can help pianists feel more connected to the piano and reduce nervousness.

Engage in positive self-talk and affirmation. Remind yourself of your preparation, skills, and previous successful performances. Repeat phrases such as "I am well-prepared" and "I am confident in my abilities."

Visualize walking onto the stage with confidence, sitting at the piano, and delivering a successful performance. Imagine the audience enjoying the music and the feeling of satisfaction following a successful performance.

Focus on the breath and practice deep breathing. Take slow, deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth. This can help calm the nervous system and reduce anxiety.

Use grounding techniques to center the body. Focus on the sensation of the feet on the ground and visualize roots growing from the feet into the floor, connecting the body to a sense of stability and strength beneath it.

Running can be an effective way to release anxiety and reduce stress before a recital. Engaging in cardiovascular exercise like running can help stimulate the release of endorphins, which are known as "feel-good" hormones that can improve mood and reduce anxiety. Running also increases blood flow, which can help clear the mind and promote a sense of relaxation.²⁵

Experiment and find what works the best. The key is to find a routine that helps one relax, focus, and approach the stage with confidence.

²⁵ Jane L. Harte, Georg H. Eifert, and Roger Smith., "The effects of running and meditation on beta-endorphin, corticotropin-releasing hormone and cortisol in plasma, and on mood," *Biological Psychology* 40, no. 3 (1995), 252.

3. PHYSICAL PERSPECTIVE DURING PERFORMANCE

3.1. Pianist's etiquette

Basic etiquette for the pianist is worth discussing in order to achieve a successful piano recital. From the moment a pianist enters on stage, they are the focus of the audience. Generally speaking, pianists' etiquette includes two aspects: the pianist's physical presentation and the attire chosen.

When it comes to showcasing confidence as a pianist, there are several key elements of one's physicality to be aware of, including posture, body alignment, hand and arm movement, facial expression, body movement at transitional moments during or between works, and stage presence.

Maintain an upright and balanced posture while sitting at the piano. Avoid slouching or leaning excessively, as it can convey a lack of confidence. Sit tall with shoulders relaxed and back straight.

Ensure the body is aligned with the piano. Position yourself at the center of the keyboard and maintain a symmetrical posture. This alignment demonstrates a sense of control and confidence.

Pay attention to the movement of the hands and arms. Keep them relaxed and fluid, allowing them to flow naturally across the keys. Unless specifically related to the music, avoid tense or rigid movements, as they can indicate nervousness.

Maintain a calm and focused facial expression while performing. Avoid excessive facial tension or expressions of anxiety, as they can detract from a confident appearance. Project confidence and enjoyment through the facial expression.

Smooth and controlled transitions between different sections or pieces can contribute to a sense of confidence. Practice seamless transitions without hesitation or interruption, conveying a sense of mastery and control.

When moving on and off the stage, walk with purpose and confidence. Maintain a steady pace and hold your head high. Engage with the audience through eye contact and acknowledge their presence with a confident demeanor.

Being mindful of these physical elements and incorporating them into the performance can convey a strong sense of confidence for the pianist. Confidence comes from a combination of technical proficiency, mental preparation, and self-assurance, all of which can be expressed through one's physicality and overall stage presence.

A pianist's physical presentation also includes the following elements: the gait on and off the stage, the beginning and ending bow, the facial demeanor of the pianist, and the seated position. Studies show that the time it takes to make an impression on someone is less than seven seconds. Also, the body language of a person has four times the impact of the spoken word on the impression you make.²⁶ Here are some tips for pianists toward standing, walking, seating, and adopting facial expressions in a way that will convey confidence.

In performance, a flamenco dancer stands straight with their head up, shoulders back, ribs lifted, and chest open. They walk in a moderate tempo with both hands relaxed and naturally swing on each side. Many of these body language elements are applicable to the pianist as well. Such elements will help the pianist display a sense of confidence as a performer and show their individual spirit to the audience.

²⁶ Waddell, George, and Aaron Williamon, "Eye of the Beholder: Stage Entrance Behavior and Facial Expression Affect Continuous Quality Ratings in Music Performance," *Frontiers in Psychology* 8 (2017), 38.

To demonstrate confidence and sincerity, a pianist should have a smile on their face and make as much eye contact with the audience as possible. Michael Ellsberg says in “The Power of Eye Contact” that “eye contact is a shared experience and one of the most powerful tools in human face-to face interaction.”²⁷

From the moment a pianist walks on stage, they are presenting themselves with their personality, temperament, etc. A confident body language helps to build a successful recital at the very beginning.

From the point of view of costume, there are some tips to consider for a piano recital: first, wear appropriate formal clothing that matches the concert hall’s ambient temperature. Second, wear a pair of comfortable shoes that works well for pedaling. Third, keep one’s hair clean and tidy so that it will not take one’s attention away from the keyboard. Fourth is to not wear any accessories that will make noises while performing. Well-considered use of formal wear plays an important role in making a good impression during the piano performance.

3.2. Physical movement of the piano performance

The influence of physical gestures in piano performance has become a common topic in recent years. A 2007 study by Davidson investigated the role of gesture and expression in piano performance. The findings indicated that audiences perceived performers who exhibited more expressive gestures and movements as being more emotionally engaged and technically skilled. Physical movement is also related to the pianists’ personality and performance style.²⁸ I have analyzed and compared different performing styles of great pianists using recital videos and presented my findings in chronological order from oldest to newest. The purpose of this is to

²⁷ Ibid., 68.

²⁸ Jane W. Davidson, “Qualitative Insights into the use of Expressive Body Movement in Solo Piano Performance: A Case Study Approach,” *Psychology of Music* 35 (2007), 382.

understand the physical elements of gesture and movement that are associated with a successful piano performance.

The following pianists are considered some of the most popular for world concert audiences during different time periods. I gave a close look at their successful concert videos, comparing and analyzing the physical movements of their head, neck, shoulder, back, chest, seated position, arms, elbow, forearms, wrists, fingers, legs, and feet.

First is Polish pianist and composer Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860-1941), who was considered to have the highest level of piano virtuosity.

When Paderewski performed, his head, neck, and shoulders tended to be stable while leaning a bit forward without any significant movements, regardless of whether the music was quite soft or tremendous. He was seated almost completely on the bench with his back straight and chest facing toward the keyboard. His arms were relaxed, with his physical movement mainly concentrated on his fingers, wrists, and forearms. When the music was quiet and tender, he had less movement but still flexible fingers and wrist, while the forearms interacted with each other naturally. When the music was approaching a climax, Paderewski lifted his hands, wrists, and forearms above the piano lid and presented a triangle-like shape between his elbows, the keyboard, and his hands or wrists. He outlined a 100-degree angle from his legs to his feet when stationary. Even when the music was intense, his physical movement remained relaxed and natural.

The next pianist is Vladimir Horowitz (1903-1989), who was regarded as one of the greatest pianists ever.

Horowitz gave many piano recitals throughout his lifetime, though he withdrew from public performance several times during his active years (1936 to 1985). There are many videos

of his concerts. When Horowitz performed at a younger age, his head, neck, back, and chest inclined forward to the piano and he sat at the front quarter of the stool with his feet on the pedal most of the time. During performance, his head and whole upper body followed the music with tiny left to right movements. When the music became excited or furious, Horowitz lifted his hands above the piano lid at fast speed, followed by his wrists and arms, with his left foot stepping behind his right foot. Looking at videos of Horowitz near the end of his career, he exhibited less movement in his arms with greater focus on finger motion.

When comparing the physical movements of these two pianists, Paderewski's hands, wrists, and forearms are parallel and above the keyboard all the time which conveyed a relaxed and loose feeling. However, when Horowitz performed, his wrist was quite close to the keyboard and often lower than the keyboard. Also, instead of sitting straight like Paderewski, Horowitz leaned forward to the keyboard. In general, Horowitz's physical movement conveyed a more intense visual presentation than Paderewski.

The next pianist is Argentinian pianist Martha Argerich, whose international reputation spread widely in 1965 when she won the first prize of the 7th International Chopin Piano Competition.

During Argerich's performances, she was seated on the front half of the piano stool with her hands parallel to the keyboard and elbows above the keyboard. Her back was straight most of the time, with only a few moments at the end of a piece when she tended to lean forward. Her head moved up and down, following the music's character and rhythm. Similar to Paderewski and Horowitz, Argerich lifted her hands with her wrists, forearms, and arms following naturally above the keyboard when she played an exciting and powerful passage. Then, when the music became softer, there was less physical movement. Her feet mostly rested on the pedal.

The next classical pianist is Lang Lang from China, who is one of the most successful living concert musicians.

Lang Lang's physical movement tended to be more active and exaggerated compared to the previous pianists. When he performed, Lang Lang's head followed the music's character and phrasing, sometimes spinning in a circle or presenting a passionate and fast nod from high to low or from left to right. He tended to be seated halfway onto the piano stool, with his back bent slightly. He leaned forward and back, following the music.

Lang Lang's hands were parallel to the keyboard when he was playing. At certain points, one of his hands would dance off the keyboard above the lid, either in front of his face, above his head, or occasionally even behind his body when there was only one hand playing or at the end of a piece. Lang Lang's legs were also active during performances, with his feet prepared to use both sustain and soft pedals. Lang Lang's whole body came off the stool when he was applying additional force into the keyboard. Compared to the previous three pianists, Lang Lang's piano performances tended to be more visually demonstrative in his physical presentation.

Yujia Wang is another Chinese classical pianist who has been praised by the world's music critics and audience for both her virtuosic piano performances and clothing style during performance.

During recitals, Yujia sat at the front half of the piano stool. Her back followed the music's dynamics and the phrasing, sometime leaning forward and backward or moving to the left or right, following her hands. Her head shook up or down strongly when the music became agitated and thrilling. Like the previous pianists, Yujia's hands were parallel to the keyboard with flat fingers and flexible wrists, forearms, and upper arms. Her elbow was a little above the keyboard, while her feet were both on the pedals.

In conclusion, these great concert pianists share a number of physical elements: most of their motion was focused on their agile fingers, with flexible and relaxed wrist, forearms, and arms. Their hands were parallel to the keyboard with flat fingertips touching the keyboard. The hand and arm movements became greater above the keyboard lid during louder passages. On the contrary, less movement occurred when playing soft passages. Physical movement was concentrated mostly on the hands and wrists, followed by loose forearms and arms.

Physical gestures convey pianists' personalities while at the same time the size and speed of the physical movements reflects and influences the music's broad characters and expressions. When the music gets stronger, louder, and more dramatic there is bigger and faster physical movement in almost every pianist observed. On the opposite side, when the music calms down and becomes softer, there is a more still, smaller, and slower physical movement. Pianists' movements are often associated with the rhythm, technique, character, and phrasing structure of a piece. In summary, physical movement is an essential element of achieving a successful piano performance.

3.3. Facial expression

Although the role of facial expressions in pianists' performances has been analyzed less compared to that of singers, the contribution of facial expressions to a successful piano recital is significant.

One past experiment involved participants identifying the gold-medal performer of an international piano competition. The participants were given six-second clips of audio recordings and videos of three finalists. Participants were found to have a much higher chance of picking

the winner of the competition by watching video recordings compared to only audio recordings.²⁹

Facial expressions reflect a pianist's confidence, comfort, and, at times, errors in performance. By comparing videos of successful performances to those of less successful performances, I examine the importance of facial expression.

When pianists perform successfully in a recital, their facial expressions communicate feelings of comfort, relaxation, and confidence while reflecting the music's character.

I compared performance videos of the following pianists: Lang Lang, Martha Argerich, and Yujia Wang. I turned off the volume of the videos and only watched their facial expressions to attempt to interpolate what kind of music the pianists were trying to express.

During Lang Lang's solo performance, his facial expressions tended to be diverse and colorful. For example, when the music was tender and quiet, he closed his eyes in a rather slow motion and smiled gently and serenely. When the music turns to a cute, spirited, and lively character, his eyes open widely and looked to the side quickly. When the music became furious and vigorous, there was a corresponding frown that appeared on Lang Lang's face. His mouth also followed the music's energy, with tight lips during intense passages.

During Yujia Wang's performance, her facial expressions also told the story of the music and communicated with the audience well. In one passage, she frowned a little bit and her eyes looked down at the keyboard, with her mouth seeming to whisper. This depicted a sad, slower, legato-like passage. A mild smile with an eyebrow slightly raised appeared on Yujia's face when she played a cute and light passage. Similar to Lang Lang, when the music became exciting,

²⁹ Ibid., 490.

intense, and violent, Yujia frowned deeply, her eyes delivering a sense of anger, and she exhibited tight lips.

During the lyrical and beautiful passages performed by pianist Martha Argerich, she frowned with her eyes closed and the corner of her mouth turned down a little bit, conveying a sad story. When she built up the music, she opened her eyes but remained frowning, and her mouth sang along with the music. At times when the music presented a wide, broad, and extensive scene, Argerich opened her eyes and looked around from the right side to the left side, visually depicting the vast spatial dimension of the piece.

The previous observations show that the visual element of a performance will trigger immediate reactions separate from the aural information.³⁰ And, some findings indicate that facial expressions reflect a person's emotions and convey trustworthy information equal to one's verbal communication, which play a prominent role in social interaction.³¹

Alternately, facial expressions can reflect performance errors. In such situations, pianists might express embarrassment or have an awkward smile on their face. For instance, I remember one of my past performances in which I was nervous, and the result was that soon after I started the music I forgot almost the entire piece. At that point in my performance video, my face blushed slightly and my facial expression conveyed strong awkwardness and embarrassment. There was even one moment when I was laughing at myself.

Another example involves the great Portuguese classical pianist Maria Joao Pires, who is widely recognized as one of the best interpreters and performers of Mozart and Beethoven.

³⁰ Ibid., 513.

³¹ Jeroen Stouten and David De Cremer, "Seeing is Believing: The Effects of Facial Expressions of Emotion and Verbal Communication in Social Dilemmas," *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making* 23 (2010), 272.

During a public concert in Amsterdam, she did not expect to perform a certain Mozart concerto. However, the orchestra had already begun to play the piece. From the video, her face delivered a sense of worry, and an embarrassed smile appeared on her face, which she tried to hide from the audience with one of her hands while turning her face toward the conductor. Then, as she stared at the conductor, her face conveyed a sense of pressure and stress.

In conclusion, a pianist's facial expression communicates their emotion and expresses the character of the music with the audience. Some pianists, especially younger or less trained pianists, may show an awkward smile during performance difficulties. Conversely, pianists tend to have in common such facial expressions as frown, expressive closing or opening of the eyes, and singing along when they are successful in playing and expressing the music during a recital.

From what has been discussed above regarding both physical movement and facial expression, the extent to which a pianist should convey the music through physical and facial expression is a matter of interpretation and personal style. Different pianists have diverse approaches to performance and there is no definitive rule governing the ideal amount of physical or facial expression. However, here are some factors for pianists to consider:

Expressive movements and facial expressions can serve as a means for a pianist to authentically communicate the emotions and intentions of the music. The performer's physical expression should align with the emotional content of the piece, enhancing the audience's understanding and connection with the music. Each pianist has their own artistic interpretation and expressive style. Some performers may naturally exhibit more physical and facial expression while others may have a more restrained approach. The key is to find a balance that feels authentic to the performer's personality while effectively conveying the music's message.

Consideration should also be given to the audience's experience and engagement. While expressive physical and facial movements can captivate and connect with listeners, excessive or exaggerated gestures might become distracting and overshadow the musical performance. It is important to strike a balance that enhances the audience's engagement without detracting from the music itself.

Pianists need to maintain a level of physical control and technical precision while performing. Excessive physical movements that compromise technical accuracy can negatively impact the overall quality of the performance. It is crucial to find a balance where expressive movements do not hinder technical proficiency.

Finally, the extent of physical and facial expression should be guided by the individual pianist's musicianship and artistic choices, the specific musical context, and the desired emotional communication. It is a nuanced and subjective matter, where finding a balance that resonates with both the performer and the audience is key.

4. PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS DURING PERFORMANCE

4.1. Psychological facts and physical reactions

There are a variety of psychological elements involved in a piano performance, and this chapter will discuss and summarize the psychological elements that may have positive and negative contribution to a piano performance. I have summarized some key points regarding these psychological aspects, including performance anxiety, excitement, stress and pressure, mood and emotions, and post-performance effects in order to help pianists to realize and accept the psychological facts and to make corresponding adjustment in order to achieve a successful piano recital.

Performance anxiety, also known as stage fright, is a common experience among musicians. It is characterized by feelings of nervousness, fear, and apprehension before or during a performance. Piano performances, especially in high-stakes situations, can create stress and pressure for performers. Symptoms may include increased heart rate, trembling hands, dry mouth, sweating, and negative thoughts.³² Strategies such as relaxation techniques, mental rehearsal, and positive self-talk can help manage performance anxiety.

While performance anxiety can be challenging, many performers also experience excitement and heightened energy. This heightened state can contribute to a sense of energy, focus, and enthusiasm during a performance. Properly channeling this excitement can enhance the performer's engagement and the overall quality of the performance.

Piano performances can evoke a range of emotions, both positive and negative. The emotional content of the music being performed, personal connections to the piece, and the

³² Joann Marie Kirchner: Performance Anxiety in Solo Piano Playing (The University of Oklahoma, 2002), 22.

response of the audience can influence the performer's mood. Additionally, the pressure and self-criticism associated with performing can affect one's emotional state. Awareness of these emotional shifts as well as techniques like emotional regulation and mindfulness can assist in maintaining a balanced and focused mindset.

Following a performance, pianists may experience a range of emotional responses, including a sense of accomplishment, relief, meditateness, or even disappointment. Evaluation and feedback received from others, as well as the individual's own self-assessment, can influence their emotional state and subsequent motivation for improvement.

It is important to note that these psychological factors can vary from person to person and across different performance contexts. Each pianist's experience is unique, and strategies for managing these psychological aspects should be personalized to suit individual needs. It is always good to seek support from teachers, coaches, or mental health professionals specializing in performance psychology, which can be valuable for addressing these factors in a constructive manner.

4.2. Performance anxiety solutions

Performance anxiety is a common phenomenon appearing among musicians and is often called Music Performance Anxiety (MPA).³³

In my own experience performing publicly, I noted the following psychological and physical elements from my best and worst public piano concerts: among my less impressive recitals, my mental condition involved feelings of unsettlement, worry, and distraction, which were reflected in my body movements through shaking and unmanageable hands, fingers, and a

³³ Isabella Mazzarolo and Emery Schubert, "A Short Performance Anxiety Scale for Musicians," *Frontiers in Psychology* (2022), 82.

fast heartbeat. However, in some of my rather successful performances I felt more confident, excited, focused, and comfortable, which manifested in physical reactions through firmer fingers and more controlled hands as well as a relatively smooth and steady heartbeat.

An experiment was done using Individual Zones of Optimal Functioning (IZOF), which is a psychological concept that refers to the optimal emotional state for an individual's peak performance in sports or other performance domains, to review pianists' anxiety levels and predict their performance. IZOF scores show that performance anxiety does indeed affect a pianist's performance.³⁴

As many piano students and performers have realized and suffered from Music Performance Anxiety, there have been studies on the different treatments to help reach a better mental condition and achieve a successful performance. I will now explore and discuss different solutions and methods in order to help pianists deal with Music Performance Anxiety.

Psychodynamic therapy has helped performers to understand both the conscious and unconscious aspects of public performance. It has been popular with great musicians such as Gustav Mahler, Sergei Rachmaninov, and Robert Schumann, who received psychotherapeutic support during difficult times in their lives.³⁵

Psychodynamic therapy is a form of psychotherapy that focuses on exploring the unconscious processes and unresolved conflicts that may be influencing a person's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. While it is not specifically tailored for pianists, it can be applied to individuals in various professions, including pianists. Psychodynamic therapy aims to increase

³⁴ Xuebin Lou, "Psychological Regulation in the Teaching of Piano Performance" *Revista Argentina De Clínica Psicológica* (2020), 1028.

³⁵ Dianna T. Kenny: *The Psychology of Music Performance Anxiety* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 93.

self-awareness and understanding, improve interpersonal relationships, and promote personal growth.³⁶

In the context of pianists, psychodynamic therapy can help address various issues they may face, such as performance anxiety, creative blocks, perfectionism, self-doubt, or conflicts related to their artistic identity. Psychodynamic therapy includes exploring childhood experiences, addressing performance anxiety, examining self-criticism and perfectionism, and uncovering creative blocks. The therapist may help a pianist explore their early experiences related to music, such as their upbringing, parental expectations, or significant events that shaped their relationship with the piano. By uncovering and understanding these experiences, the pianist may gain insights into their relationship to their instrument and their motivation as a musician. Performance anxiety can hinder pianists' ability to perform at their best. Psychodynamic therapy can help identify underlying fears, insecurities, or past experiences that contribute to this anxiety. Through exploration and understanding, the pianist can develop coping strategies, build resilience, and reduce performance-related stress.

Moreover, pianists often have high standards for themselves, and this can lead to self-criticism and perfectionism. Psychodynamic therapy can explore the roots of these tendencies, such as early experiences of praise or criticism, and help the pianist develop a healthier relationship with their self-evaluation, finding a balance between striving for excellence and self-compassion.

Lastly, pianists, like any artists, may experience periods of creative stagnation or blockage. Psychodynamic therapy can help explore the underlying reasons for these blocks, such

³⁶ Falk Leichsenring and Eric Leibing, "The effectiveness of psychodynamic therapy and cognitive behavior therapy in the treatment of personality disorders: A meta-analysis," *American journal of psychiatry* 160, no. 7 (2003), 1223.

as fear of failure, lack of interest and motivation, self-doubt, or unresolved emotional conflicts. By addressing these deeper issues, the pianist can regain their creative flow and explore new avenues of expression.

It is important to note that psychodynamic therapy is a collaborative process between a therapist and client, and specific goals and approaches may vary depending on the individual's unique needs and circumstances.

Another possible solution to MPA is visualization. I first encountered visualization practice in a class called “enhanced performance techniques” (EPT) during my Master of Art program at the Royal Academy of Music in London. The class discussed ways to prepare for a performance by combining visualization and meditation to train the body’s anxiety system and reduce the amount of adrenaline to help players keep physical control and a clear mental state. EPT consists of visualization and meditation.

EPT involves a method of two weeks of visualization before a public performance, consisting of the following: sit or lie down in a comfortable position every day before going to sleep at a peaceful place that will not be disturbed and spend up to ten minutes visualizing the things to be done between that moment and the performance. Starting several days before the day of the performance, visualize in as detailed a way as possible the routine of the performance.

Continuing to the performance day, you can imagine waking up in the morning, eating breakfast, warming up, dressing for the event, waiting backstage, walking onto the stage, smiling at the audience, and then performing successfully, bowing, and leaving the stage. This type of visualization requires imaginatively including as many as possible of the relevant details related to the preparation of the performance and the performance itself and using the senses of sound, sight, touch, taste, and smell. This helps the visualization best simulate the circumstances of the

real event. In such a way, it helps the performer's brain to realize, prepare for, and adapt to every possible dimension of the performance in advance and lets the performers get used to the performance onstage and gain comfort and confidence toward achieving a successful recital.

Regarding the meditative aspect of EPT, there are a great many ways to approach and practice meditations nowadays through videos, audios, and apps. The focus for dealing with MPA here is to help musicians release pressure, stress, and strengthen their concentration to achieve a successful performance. There are several types of meditation that a pianist can incorporate into their practice routine to enhance focus, relaxation, and overall well-being such as mindfulness meditation, breath awareness meditation, loving-kindness meditation, visualization meditation, and walking meditation.

Mindfulness meditation involves bringing non-judgmental attention to the present moment. It cultivates awareness of bodily sensations, thoughts, and emotions without getting caught up in them. Pianists can practice mindfulness meditation while playing, focusing on the physical sensations of their fingers on the keys, the sound and quality of the music, and their breath as they play.

Breath awareness meditation involves focusing on the breath as a point of concentration. Pianists sit in a comfortable position, close their eyes, and bring their attention to the natural rhythm of their breath. By focusing on the breath, they can cultivate a calm and centered state of mind, which can positively impact their piano playing.

Loving-kindness meditation involves directing feelings of love, kindness, and compassion toward oneself and others. Pianists can engage in loving-kindness meditation by silently repeating phrases of well-wishes and goodwill toward themselves, their music, their

audience, and all those involved in the musical experience. This practice can foster a sense of connection, empathy, and joy in playing.

Visualization meditation involves using the power of imagination to create mental images or scenarios. Pianists can visualize themselves performing and feeling confident and connected to the music. They can imagine the sound resonating beautifully in the performance venue, the audience appreciating their performance, and the overall success of the musical experience. Visualization can help build confidence, reduce performance anxiety, and enhance overall performance quality.

While not related to piano playing, walking meditation can be a helpful practice for pianists to clear their minds, reduce stress, and improve focus. Pianists can engage in walking meditation by walking slowly and mindfully, paying attention to the sensations in their feet and legs as they move. This practice can help create a mental space for reflection, relaxation, and mental clarity before or after piano practice sessions.

Meditation is a personal practice, and different techniques may resonate with different individuals. It is important to explore and experiment with various meditation styles to find what works best for you as a pianist. Starting with short sessions and gradually increasing the duration can help establish a consistent meditation practice that complements your piano playing and overall well-being.

I have personally found meditation helpful for me in increasing my ability to be mindful, which results in the release of both my body and mind's tension. Many scientific studies have proved that the benefit of meditation on the human body is significant in that it soothes the nervous system and certain negative effects on the body such as depression, anxiety, tension, and

fatigue. At the same time, practicing meditation consistently can enhance brain volume as well as decrease physical pain.³⁷

Another effective approach to addressing MPA is the concept of the law of attraction, a philosophical or spiritual belief that states positive thoughts attract positive energy, leading to favorable outcomes, whereas negative thoughts attract negative experiences, resulting in undesirable outcomes in a person's life.

In the case of a pianist, utilizing the principles of the law of attraction can be beneficial. By practicing constant positive thinking and adopting an optimistic mindset, the pianist can repeat affirmations such as "I trust myself completely," "I am capable," and "I will enjoy my performance, and the audience will appreciate my music." Through daily repetition of these phrases, the brain will receive cues and develop a strong belief system. This will translate positive thoughts into actions, ultimately leading to a successful performance.

Furthermore, incorporating conciliatory thoughts can help pianists feel more at ease and confident. Phrases such as "It's okay," "No matter what happens, I fully accept and love myself," and "I will perform my best, embracing imperfections" can provide a sense of comfort. It is essential for pianists to acknowledge and accept their imperfections and to recognize and embrace any shortcomings. This mindset allows pianists to perform freely onstage in front of the public and achieve success.

A further method for pianists to reduce their MPA levels is to acknowledge that although they may feel anxious during a public performance it is challenging for the audience to perceive

³⁷ Alice G. Walton: 7 ways meditation can actually change the brain (Forbes, February 9, 2015), 79.

that anxiety.³⁸ As the saying goes, "fake it until you make it." Pianists must realize that their performance anxiety is internal and may not be evident to the external world.

When dealing with MPA, pianists often experience a lack of confidence and self-recognition while simultaneously having their thinking distracted from the music. Seeking guidance from a psychodynamic therapy consultant, practicing visualization techniques and meditation, or applying aspects of the law of attraction can help cultivate positive thoughts. In doing so, pianists can fully enjoy each public piano performance and achieve success.

³⁸ Diaz, Frank M.: Relationships among Meditation, Perfectionism, Mindfulness, and Performance Anxiety among Collegiate Music Students (*Journal of Research in Music Education* 66, 2018), 152.

5. UNEXPECTED SITUATIONS DURING THE PIANO PERFORMANCE

5.1. The relationship between practice and performance

Before delving into the unexpected situations pianists encounter on stage it is important to discuss the relationship between practice and performance. Many pianists are aware that they tend to make unforeseen mistakes during public recitals and concerts which they may never face during practice sessions.

As a big event or public performance approaches, pianists often find themselves increasing their daily practice hours due to the pressure and tension of delivering a successful performance on stage. To explore the connection between practice and performance, my focus is on achieving the most efficient and excellent results from daily practice in order to enhance public performances through memorization and a successful performance mindset.

I strongly believe that paying attention to memorization during daily practice is crucial for a successful piano performance, based on my own experience as well as the progress of my students. When I begin learning a piece of music, I intentionally rely on my brain to memorize it rather than relying solely on muscle memory. By doing so, I can avoid relying on repetitive muscle memorization, which can easily falter under the pressure and nervousness experienced onstage.

When teaching my students, I also emphasize the importance of early memorization. For example, I encourage them to memorize each hand separately or to memorize individual lines of the music. They then combine any two lines from memory, ensuring a detailed understanding of the score, including dynamics, tempo, musical terms, expressions, and articulations. This approach helps them develop the ability to practice the piano mindfully, rather than mechanically moving their fingers without thoughtful consideration like a robot.

Strengthened memorization techniques as described above have proven to help both myself and my students perform with confidence and success onstage. By having a clear mind that is deeply connected to the essence of the music, we are better equipped to deliver compelling performances. Additionally, a study by Lehmann and Ericsson in 1998 indicates that the more pianists devote themselves to extra memorization or follow a specific over-learning plan the fewer chances there are of making mistakes during a performance.³⁹

The relationship between practice and performance involves treating each practice session as if it were a real performance, with excitement and energy, as Stephen Covey suggested in saying to "begin with the end in mind." By rehearsing with a performance mindset on a daily basis, pianists become accustomed to the physical and mental demands of performing and ultimately achieve successful public recitals.

5.2. Summary of unexpected mistakes and situations

Let us now delve deeper into some unexpected challenges and situations that pianists may encounter during a public performance. As a pianist, it is crucial to anticipate and prepare for these occurrences. Here is a summary of common unexpected situations that may arise during a piano performance:

Memory lapses can manifest in two ways. First, nervousness or inadequate preparation may lead to forgetting a portion of the piece. Second, it is common to confuse similar or repeated sections within a piece.

³⁹ Andreas C. Lehmann, and K. Anders Ericsson: Preparation of a public piano performance: The relation between practice and performance (1998), 68.

Various technical challenges can arise, including navigating big jumps, playing complex chords, handling irregular intervals, executing fast passages, tackling virtuosic sections, and maintaining a steady rhythm, among others.

External factors such as audience disturbances and environmental noises as well as sudden temperature changes can significantly impact the piano performance.

Pianists may experience physical discomfort, such as hand cramps, finger slips, or discomfort caused by inappropriate bench height or other physical factors, which can interfere with their playing.

Finally, pianists may occasionally experience broken strings on the piano. By acknowledging and preparing for these potential obstacles, pianists can develop strategies to overcome them and maintain composure during their performances.

5.3. Internal and external factors that might cause emergency situations during a public performance

As a performer, I have come across various sayings that highlight the ever-changing nature of life and the unpredictable nature of the future, regardless of how well-prepared one may be. In the context of piano performance, there are internal and external factors that can contribute to emergency situations. Here are some general examples, grouped into internal and external factors. First, a summary of internal factors:

Insufficient practice or preparation can lead to memory lapses, technical mistakes, and heightened performance anxiety.

High levels of anxiety can result in panic attacks, dizziness, or even fainting during a performance.

Extended rehearsal and performance schedules can cause fatigue, negatively impacting the performer's physical and mental well-being.

Pre-existing medical conditions such as carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, or arthritis can give rise to health emergencies during a performance.

Malfunctions of the piano, such as broken keys or pedals, can disrupt the performance.

Audience disturbances, disruptive behavior, or even instances of violence can create emergency situations during a piano performance.

External elements such as extreme temperatures, lighting issues, or changes in humidity can affect the performance.

Unexpected incidents such as fire, building collapses, or power outages can lead to emergencies during a piano performance.

These factors, both internal and external, can pose challenges and unexpected situations for pianists. It is important for performers to be aware of these possibilities and develop strategies to handle them effectively, ensuring their safety and maintaining the integrity of their performances.

5.4. Ways to enhance the ability of solving emergency situations in a public performance

Maintaining composure and adapting one's playing technique to address emergency issues during a live performance is of utmost importance. Here are some general strategies for resolving both external and internal problems that may arise during a public piano performance:

5.4.1. Dealing with audience behavior

When faced with a disruptive audience member, it is crucial to remain focused on the music and continue playing.

5.4.2. Addressing internal factors

To reduce performance anxiety, incorporate relaxation techniques like deep breathing, visualization, or verbal self-suggestion into your practice routine. Ensure that you have dedicated ample time to practice to build confidence in your performance. Practice playing under pressure and simulate performance conditions during rehearsals to familiarize yourself with potential challenges.

5.4.3. Managing health issues

If you have pre-existing medical conditions, take proper care of them before your public performance. Remember that emergencies can happen and that it is crucial to maintain a calm and composed demeanor to effectively handle any unexpected situations. Communication with event staff and other performers is also essential to ensure that everyone is informed and can work together to achieve a successful recital.

Remaining calm and adjusting the playing technique or improvising when faced with emergencies is vital during a live performance. Communicate with event staff, be aware of environmental factors, address internal factors like performance anxiety through relaxation techniques, and take care of your health before the public performance. By being prepared and working collaboratively, you can navigate through unforeseen challenges and deliver a successful piano recital.

To help pianists enhance their ability to handle emergency situations during public performances, I have compiled the following practical tips:

5.4.4. Improve piano skills

Enhancing piano skills is the most effective and reliable approach to handle emergency situations onstage. Good music, like a pyramid, relies on a strong foundation of piano technique

and skills. By dedicating time to improve these skills, pianists can cultivate confidence and proficiency, enabling them to perform with freedom and success on stage. Consider the following strategies to improve your piano skills:

1) Technical exercises: Incorporate targeted technical exercises into your practice routine. These exercises can focus on areas such as finger dexterity, hand coordination, scales, arpeggios, and chord progressions. Consistent practice of these exercises enhances your technical abilities and facilitates smoother and more precise performances.

2) Repertoire selection: Choose a diverse range of repertoire that challenges your technical and musical abilities. Explore different styles, periods, and genres to broaden your musical vocabulary and expand your interpretive skills. Working on a varied repertoire enhances your adaptability and versatility as a pianist.

3) Practice with intention: Develop a structured practice routine that includes focused and deliberate practice sessions. Break down challenging passages or techniques into smaller sections and gradually increase the tempo as you gain proficiency. Use metronome practice to develop rhythmic accuracy and precision.

4) Seek guidance from a teacher: Engage with a skilled piano teacher who can provide guidance, offer feedback, and help you refine your technique. A teacher can identify areas that need improvement, suggest appropriate exercises and repertoire, and provide valuable insights based on their experience.

5) Performance opportunities: Actively seek performance opportunities such as recitals, competitions, or informal gatherings where you can display your progress. Performing in front of an audience helps you apply your skills in a live setting and build confidence in your abilities.

Remember, consistent and focused practice is essential for continual improvement. By honing your piano skills, you lay a solid foundation that empowers you to handle unexpected challenges during performances with confidence and grace.

5.4.5. Train focus

Maintaining focus is essential for a high-quality and successful public piano performance. Given the diverse repertoire in recitals and concerts encompassing different music styles, periods, and characters, it is crucial for pianists to remain focused on the music they are performing. To improve focus during daily practice, consider the following:

Find a practice room that offers a quiet environment conducive to concentration.

Minimize distractions by avoiding electronic devices like phones, computers, and TVs that can easily divert your attention.

Limit interruptions from friends, family members, or others during practice sessions, as such interruptions can pull you out of your musical world and make it challenging to regain focus.

These external factors can influence a performer's focus. Consider the following tips:

Set a practice plan with clear goals in mind. Having a defined purpose and motivation will drive you forward and help you maintain focus.

Incorporate meditation into your routine. It can improve your level of focus as it requires a concentrated and peaceful mind.

Cultivate a deep passion and love for music. This will enable you to have a strong belief in your abilities and immerse yourself completely in the process of music-making and piano-playing, fostering unwavering dedication to practice and performance.

With this in mind, it is important to discuss how to cultivate a deep passion and love for music. While it is natural to be serious about your craft, it is also important to find ways to keep one's love for music fresh and alive. Here are some strategies to cultivate passion and maintain a sense of freshness on your musical journey, including exploring different styles and genres, attending live performances, collaborating with other musicians, embracing musical challenges, finding meaning and connection, taking breaks and finding balance, seeking inspiration beyond the piano, reflecting, and celebrating milestones.

Expand one's musical horizons by exploring various styles and genres of music. Listen to different composers, explore diverse musical traditions, and experiment with playing music outside of their comfort zone. This can bring new perspectives, inspiration, and excitement to pianist' piano playing.

Regularly attend live performances, not only of piano music but also of other instruments and ensembles. Experiencing the energy and artistry of professional musicians can reignite pianists' passion for music and provide fresh insights into performance techniques and interpretation.

Seek opportunities to collaborate with other musicians, such as instrumentalists, vocalists, or chamber groups. Collaborative music-making can be enriching and inspiring, offering new perspectives and fostering a sense of shared creativity and camaraderie.

Set goals that push outside of one's comfort zone and embrace musical challenges. Whether it is tackling a technically demanding piece, exploring complex harmonies, or mastering a new musical concept, facing challenges can bring a sense of accomplishment and fuel passion for growth and improvement.

Connect with the emotional and expressive aspects of music by exploring the stories and narratives behind compositions. Understand the historical and cultural context, explore the composer's intentions, and seek a deeper understanding of the music's meaning. This connection can infuse pianists' playing with a sense of purpose and arouse passion for expressing emotions through music.

Sometimes, stepping away from the piano for a short period can be refreshing. Take breaks when needed, engage in other hobbies or activities, and find a healthy balance between practicing and other aspects of life. This can prevent burnout and help pianists return to the piano with renewed enthusiasm.

Look for inspiration beyond the piano itself. Explore other art forms, such as visual arts, literature, dance, or nature. Draw connections between these different artistic expressions and find ways to incorporate them into musical interpretations. This multidisciplinary approach can bring freshness and unique perspectives to piano playing.

Take time to reflect on the musical journey, acknowledge the progress, and celebrate the milestones, no matter how small. Recognize the joy and satisfaction that comes from the incremental improvements and breakthroughs in the piano playing. This positive reinforcement can keep pianists' passion alive and motivate them to continue striving for excellence.

Cultivating passion is an ongoing process that requires conscious effort and an open mindset. Embrace the joy of music-making, nurture love for the piano, and stay curious and open to new experiences. By finding ways to keep the passion fresh and approaching piano playing with a sense of wonder and dedication, a pianist can maintain a lifelong love affair with music.

5.4.6. Recording

When a piano player is being recorded, whether with a camera or audio equipment, it can create a similar effect to having an audience present. The performer may feel the pressure of achieving a "one-time correct" or successful performance. This situation can intensify the level of focus and create nervousness, affecting the player's performance. To navigate this challenge, consider the following tips:

Embrace the recording process as an opportunity for growth and improvement. View it as a chance to assess your playing objectively and identify areas for refinement.

Practice performing under recording-like conditions by simulating the presence of an audience. This could involve inviting friends, family members, teachers, or even strangers to listen to your practice sessions, providing a sense of performance pressure.

Gradually increase the frequency of recording sessions to become more comfortable with the process and develop the ability to maintain focus and composure under such circumstances.

Learn from the recorded sessions by critically analyzing your performance, identifying areas that require improvement and incorporating those insights into your practice routine.

By leveraging the recording experience as a valuable tool for honing your skills and adapting to the pressure it brings, you can enhance your ability to perform confidently and effectively during public piano recitals.

5.4.7. Performing in front of people

One of the key distinctions between daily practice and a real public piano performance is the presence of a live audience. In this specific context, pianists can simulate the experience of an actual recital by inviting friends, family members, teachers, or even strangers to act as

listeners. Consider the following suggestions to replicate the atmosphere of a public performance during practice:

Create a performance-like setting by setting up a designated performance space within your practice area. Arrange chairs for your invited audience members to sit and position yourself as you would during a recital.

Request that your listeners adopt the same level of attentiveness and respect that would be expected during a public concert. This helps establish an atmosphere conducive to concentration and focus.

Recognize that performing in front of others may introduce a certain level of pressure and nervousness. Embrace this feeling and use it as an opportunity to practice managing performance anxiety and maintaining composure.

After your performance, engage in a constructive dialogue with your listeners. Request their observations and feedback regarding areas that could be improved. This can provide valuable insights for refining your skills and preparing for future performances.

By incorporating these elements into your practice routine, you can better simulate the experience of performing in front of an audience. This allows you to adapt to the dynamics of a live concert setting, build confidence, and improve your ability to deliver captivating and successful piano performances.

5.4.8. Build confidence

Embrace the process of growth and learning until you achieve your goals. In most cases during a public concert the audience will not notice or dwell on mistakes that a pianist makes. It is crucial for pianists to exude confidence and embrace mistakes as part of the unique and authentic nature of a live performance. By cultivating a positive mindset and mental state, it

becomes easier to accept mistakes and view them as valuable learning experiences on the path to future success. Remember that failure is a stepping stone to success and it is important not to fear making mistakes but instead to make every effort to minimize them. Consider the following strategies to build confidence:

Develop a repertoire of positive affirmations and encouraging self-talk that you can employ before and during performances. Remind yourself of your capabilities, strengths, and past successes to boost your confidence.

Visualize yourself performing with confidence and success. Imagine yourself delivering a flawless performance, engaging with the music, and connecting with the audience. Visualization techniques can help build confidence and reduce anxiety.

Instead of dwelling on mistakes, use them as learning opportunities. Analyze what went wrong, identify areas for improvement, and make adjustments in your practice routine. Embrace mistakes as valuable experiences that contribute to your growth as a pianist.

The more prepared you are, the more confident you will feel. Put in the necessary practice hours, memorize your repertoire, and simulate performance conditions during your rehearsals. Confidence stems from knowing that you have put in the work and are well-prepared for any challenges that may arise.

Seek out performance opportunities, both formal and informal, to gain experience and build your confidence on stage. Start with smaller, low-pressure settings and gradually progress to larger audiences. Each performance will help you become more comfortable and confident in your abilities.

Building confidence is a gradual process that requires patience and persistence. By adopting a positive mindset, learning from mistakes, and consistently working on your skills, you can develop the confidence needed to deliver captivating and memorable piano performances.

5.4.9. Increase the number of public piano performances

Another crucial way to enhance your ability to handle unexpected mistakes and situations during a public performance is to gain ample experience by performing in front of audiences. It is through real-life situations, facing genuine challenges and difficulties on stage, that pianists can truly learn and grow from their mistakes.

I highly recommend seeking out every opportunity to perform publicly. Consider participating in salon concerts, weekly studio classes, recitals, public master classes, music festivals, competitions, and similar events. By actively engaging in these performance opportunities, you will gain valuable experience and exposure to different situations. To enhance pianists' ability to tackle various problems and overcome emergencies on stage it is essential for pianists to accumulate a wealth of experience through public performances.

In conclusion, when faced with unexpected situations during a piano performance, it is important to remain calm and continue playing through any mistakes. If possible, improvise to cover them up. By incorporating the above strategies, pianists can develop and sustain a heightened sense of focus, allowing them to excel during their public piano performances. Remember that the audience is there to support you and enjoy the music and that they may not even notice any errors. Stay focused, maintain a positive attitude, and relish the experience of performing.

6. INTERACTION WITH AUDIENCE

The magic of a live public performance is the sparkle and communication between the audience and the performer. On most occasions, the audience's reaction to a concert largely decided the quality and success of a performance. Thus, interaction with the audience is worth discussing in order to achieve a successful piano recital. Extra-musical elements such as this that can form a bridge between pianist and audience are underestimated.

In this chapter, I would like to explore several methods of communication between the performer and audience in order to optimize an exciting and impressive piano performance.

6.1. Biography

Reading a pianist's biography can increase an audience's connection to the pianist. Biographies of famous pianists provide a fascinating glimpse into the lives of these exceptional musicians, revealing their journeys, achievements, and the factors that shaped their artistic paths. Despite the diversity of their backgrounds and experiences, these biographies often follow a similar structure and highlight common characteristics that contribute to their success, including the following sections: early life and training, musical education and development, career and performance highlights, repertoire and interpretation, personal life and influences, legacy and contributions, critical reception and awards, and their continuing journey.

By exploring these narratives, we can gain insights into the typical structure and key features found in the biographies of renowned pianists. Let's delve into the captivating world of pianistic biography and discover the patterns that unite these extraordinary individuals.

Biographies mostly explore the pianist's early life at the end of the biography, including their upbringing, family background, and introduction to music. Details about their initial piano

lessons, early mentors, and notable musical experiences are often covered. This section provides insights into the pianist's formative years and influences.

Biography often mentions a pianist's formal musical education, including prestigious music schools, teachers, and significant milestones in their development as a pianist. This section may discuss their technical training, repertoire expansion, and exposure to different musical styles.

Biographies often start by highlighting the pianist's notable performances, both early on and throughout their career. This includes descriptions of their breakthrough moments, competition successes, acclaimed recitals, and collaborations with renowned orchestras and conductors. Specific performances or recordings that garnered critical acclaim may be highlighted.

Some biographies also point a pianist's repertoire choices and interpretive style by discuss their affinity for specific composers or musical periods as well as approaches to bringing out the nuances and emotions in their performances. Notable recordings or interpretations of specific pieces may be analyzed.

Further, some biographies briefly mention a pianist's personal life, exploring their relationships, personal challenges, and moments of triumph or adversity. The influence of family members, teachers, and other musicians may be discussed, shedding light on the pianist's musical and personal development.

A biography may examine a pianist's lasting impact on the musical world. This may include their contributions to the piano repertoire, pedagogy, and broader musical discourse. Their influence on subsequent generations of pianists and their place within the larger musical landscape may be analyzed.

Almost every biography highlights the critical reception of the pianist's performances and recordings. This includes reviews from music critics, awards received, and recognition from prestigious institutions or organizations. The pianist's reputation among peers and the public is often discussed. As an illustration, Lang Lang, a pianist from China, included in his biography that he was acclaimed by the New York Times as the most in-demand classical artist.

Some biographies also include reflections on the pianist's career, their current activities, and ongoing musical pursuits. This section may touch upon their involvement in teaching, philanthropy, or other endeavors outside of performance.

Overall, biographies of pianists aim to provide a comprehensive portrait of the artists, combining their personal and professional life, their musical achievements, and their lasting impact on the world of piano performance.

6.2. Program notes

Program notes are common in classical as well as contemporary music concerts. Program notes originated in London and Edinburgh around the 1840s, where they were designed for chamber music concerts under the title of “Synoptical Analyses.” In the 1850s, program notes became popular for symphony concerts and were considered necessary for the audience to achieve an aesthetic view and correct information about the repertoire. Later, program notes were introduced in continental Europe and to the whole world as an important part of a concert.⁴⁰

When attending a piano performance, program notes can serve as a valuable companion, providing the audience with insights into the music they are about to experience. As a pianist, crafting effective program notes is not only a way to showcase one's expertise but also an opportunity to enhance the audience's understanding and appreciation of the repertoire. By

⁴⁰ Christina Bashford: *Concert Listening the British Way* (Oxford University Press, 2018), 187.

including relevant and engaging information, the pianist can offer a deeper context and create a meaningful connection between the music and the listeners. In this guide, I will explore the key points to include, such as composer and composition details, historical significance, musical structure and themes, performance considerations, and personal connections. I next provide valuable tips on how to write compelling program notes that captivate and inform the audience, elevating their concert experience to new heights.

We can see examples of each of the elements of a successful program note in an example program note from Schrag on Liszt's transcription of Schumann's "Widmung". Start by providing background information about the composer, including their historical context and style. Describe the specific composition being performed, including its title, date of composition, and any notable characteristics or influences. See this pertinent extract from Schrag's program note:

Franz Liszt was a Hungarian composer and virtuoso pianist of the Romantic era. "Widmung" is one of Liszt's most beloved lieder transcriptions for solo piano. It is based on the song composed by Robert Schumann as part of his song cycle "Myrthen," with lyrics written by Friedrich Rückert.⁴¹

Next, discuss any historical events or circumstances surrounding the composition that might have influenced its creation or impacted its reception:

Liszt's transcription of Schumann's "Widmung" showcases his exceptional ability to capture the essence and emotional depth of vocal music on the piano. Liszt's admiration for Schumann's compositions led him to create numerous piano transcriptions, including this heartfelt rendition of "Widmung."

⁴¹ Kezia Joy Schrag: *From Voice to Piano: Liszt's transcriptions of Ständchen and Widmung* (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2014), 16.

Explain the overall structure of the composition, highlighting its various sections, movements, or key themes. Describe any noteworthy musical techniques or motifs employed by the composer:

Liszt's transcription of "Widmung" embodies the spirit and melodic beauty of Schumann's original song. The piece was structured in a through-composed form. Compared with a strophic form, the music remains the same for each verse or stanza of the song, with only the lyrics changing. However, in through-composed music, the musical structure varies throughout the piece, adapting to the changing emotions and narrative of the lyrics. Liszt's transcription of "Widmung" follows this through-composed approach, with the piano capturing the expressive qualities of the original vocal composition by Robert Schumann.

Share insights into the technical and interpretive challenges presented by the composition. Discuss specific aspects that the pianist has focused on during their preparation or performance:

Interpreting "Widmung" requires a delicate balance between virtuosity and sensitivity. The pianist must pay careful attention to phrasing and dynamics to convey the expressive nature of the song. The melodic lines should be shaped with vocal-like qualities, allowing the listener to experience the depth of emotion conveyed by the music. Additionally, careful attention should be given to articulation, voicing, and the use of pedals to create a seamless and nuanced performance.

If appropriate, provide a personal reflection or anecdote related to the piece or the composer. This helps create a connection between the performer and the audience, fostering a sense of shared experience:

As a pianist, performing Liszt's transcription of "Widmung" is a deeply personal and rewarding experience. The piece holds a special place in my repertoire, as it allows me to merge the worlds of piano and vocal music. Through this transcription, I aim to convey the profound emotions and

dedication expressed in Schumann's original composition, while showcasing Liszt's remarkable ability to capture the essence of the human voice on the piano. By performing "Widmung," I hope to share with the audience the beauty of Liszt's interpretation and the deep connection between the composer and the performer. Through this performance, I invite you to embark on a journey of love, dedication, and musical expression.

When writing program notes for a piano performance, the pianist should aim to provide relevant and engaging information that enhances the audience's understanding and appreciation of the music being performed. Here are some tips for writing good program notes:

Know your audience: consider the level of musical knowledge and understanding of the audience members. Tailor the program notes to provide enough information for both newcomers to the music and those with more musical background.

Keep the program notes focused and avoid excessive technical jargon. Present the information in a clear and organized manner, using paragraphs or bullet points to highlight key points.

Offer historical and cultural context for the composition. Discuss the composer's life, the time in which the piece was written, and any relevant musical or societal influences. This helps the audience better appreciate the significance of the composition.

Explain the overall structure of the piece, including the number of movements, sections, or key themes. Discuss any musical techniques or motifs that are notable within the composition.

Share insights into the technical and interpretive challenges that the piece presents. Explain any aspects that you have focused on during your preparation or that you believe are crucial for a successful performance.

Share your personal connection to the piece, such as why you chose to perform it, what emotions it evokes for you, or any interesting anecdotes related to the composition or your experiences with it.

Take the time to review your program notes for clarity, grammar, and coherence. Ensure that the information flows logically and that the notes effectively convey the intended information and tone.

By following these tips, pianists can create program notes that are informative, engaging, and enhance the audience's experience and appreciation of the music being performed.

In cases where the pianist does not have direct involvement in writing the program notes, they can still communicate their interpretation and insights to the organizers or sponsors. Sharing their thoughts and perspectives with the individuals responsible for preparing the notes can help ensure that the program accurately reflects the pianist's artistic vision.

The level of pianist involvement in preparing program notes can vary depending on the specific circumstances and the dynamics between the pianist, concert organizers, and sponsors. Collaboration and communication are key to ensuring that the program notes effectively convey the pianist's intentions and enhance the audience's appreciation of the performance.

From what has been discussed above, the pianist should consider their audience and their level of familiarity with the music being performed. They can aim to strike a balance between offering informative content and keeping the notes accessible and engaging. In general, the goal is to deepen the listener's understanding and enjoyment of the music through thoughtful and well-written program notes.

6.3. Speaking from the stage

In the realm of piano performance, the interplay between music and spoken word can create a unique and engaging concert experience. While the primary focus of a recital lies in the music itself, there are certain moments when a pianist might choose to speak, adding depth, context, and connection to the performance. However, it is crucial for pianists to consider when and what to speak in a recital, as the spoken elements should complement and enhance the musical journey rather than overshadow it. In this guide, we will explore the various instances and considerations for pianists to speak during a recital, aiming to strike a delicate balance that enriches the audience's understanding and appreciation of the music, while honoring the power of musical expression.

In a traditional piano recital, speaking is not typically expected or included. The focus is primarily on the performance of the piano pieces. However, there are certain events or circumstances where a pianist might include spoken elements in their recital. Here are a few examples: Lecture-recital, theme recital, collaborative performance, educational or outreach events.

In a lecture-recital, the pianist combines musical performance with spoken commentary to educate and engage the audience. They may discuss the historical context, musical analysis, composer's intentions, or other relevant topics related to the pieces being performed.

If a pianist designs a recital around a specific theme, they may choose to speak briefly between pieces to provide context or explain the significance of the theme. For example, a recital featuring works inspired by nature could include short spoken interludes describing the connections between the music and natural elements.

In certain collaborative performances, a pianist may speak to introduce or interact with other musicians involved in the performance. This can occur in chamber music concerts or when accompanying vocalists or instrumentalists.

When performing for a non-traditional audience, such as children or individuals new to classical music, a pianist may incorporate spoken elements to engage and educate the listeners. They might explain the structure of a piece, share anecdotes about the composers, or provide insights into the musical elements being presented.

It is important to note that speaking in a recital should be done purposefully and thoughtfully, enhancing the overall experience for the audience. The content and extent of the spoken elements should be tailored to the specific event and audience.

Including speech in a recital should be done sparingly and thoughtfully. Effective communication requires clear and concise language, appropriate tone and volume, and good timing. The performer must be sensitive to the audience's level of knowledge and interest, and adjust their speech accordingly. They should also be mindful of the pace and flow of the performance, ensuring that their remarks do not disrupt the musical continuity or create unnecessary pauses.

The performer-and-audience communication can take many forms depending on the performer's style and the type of music being performed. The key is to create a sense of connection and engagement between the performer and the audience. When done well, the performer-and-audience communication can enhance the listener's experience, deepen their appreciation of the music, and create a sense of connection and shared understanding between the pianist and the audience, which lead to achieve a successful public piano recital.

In a speech during a piano recital, a pianist can cover a variety of topics to engage the audience and enhance their understanding and appreciation of the music. Here are some suggestions for what a pianist can say in a speech during a recital including welcome and gratitude, program overview, composer and piece background, musical analysis, personal connection, performance considerations, audience engagement, closing remarks.

Begin by welcoming the audience and expressing the gratitude for their presence. Thank them for joining in this musical journey.

Provide a brief overview of the program, mentioning the composers and the pieces. This can help set the context for the audience and give them a sense of what to expect.

Share interesting information about the composers and the specific pieces. Talk about their historical significance, the time period in which they were composed, or any unique characteristics of the music. Mention any anecdotes or stories that shed light on the composer's inspiration or intentions.

Offer insights into the musical structure, themes, or techniques employed in the pieces. Explain any notable musical elements, such as recurring motifs, rhythmic patterns, or harmonic progressions. This can help the audience listen for specific aspects and deepen their understanding of the music.

Share personal connection to the music. Explain why these pieces are meaningful to include them in the recital. Share any personal experiences or emotions that the music evokes.

Discuss any technical or interpretative challenges of the pieces. Explain how to approach these challenges or highlight specific aspects of the music that particularly captivating or challenging.

Engage the audience by inviting them to actively listen for certain musical elements or to reflect on the emotional journey of the music. Encourage them to immerse themselves in the performance and share in the experience.

Conclude the speech by expressing appreciation for the audience's attention and support. Thank them for being a part of this musical experience. If desired, pianists can mention any upcoming performances or events they may be involved in.

Keep the speech concise and well-rehearsed, focusing on the most important points. It should provide valuable insights and create a connection between you, the music, and the audience.

In addition, to evaluate the incorporation of speech during a piano performance under different contexts, pianists should consider the following:

Relevance: Assess whether the speech adds value and relevance to the music being performed. Does it enhance the audience's understanding, emotional connection, or appreciation of the music in that particular context?

Balance: Consider the balance between speech and music. The speech should complement and support the musical performance rather than overshadow it. Strive for a cohesive and well-integrated combination.

Execution: Evaluate the clarity, articulation, and delivery of the speech. Ensure that it is intelligible and effectively communicates the intended message without detracting from the overall performance.

Audience Response: Seek feedback and observe the audience's reactions. Assess their engagement, attentiveness, and overall response to the incorporation of speech. This can help pianists gauge the effectiveness of approaching and making adjustments if necessary.

Overall, the decision to incorporate speech during a piano performance is a personal and artistic choice. Experiment, seek feedback, and consider the specific context and goals of the performance to determine whether it aligns with pianists' artistic vision and enhance the overall experience for both pianists and their audience. By carefully weighing these considerations, pianists can create unique and engaging performances that reflect their artistic vision and connect with the audience on a deeper level. It is essential to explore and experiment with different approaches to find what aligns with pianists' artistic vision and the specific music they are performing.

7. AFTER PERFORMANCE

7.1. Encores

The encore tradition originated in the 18th century, first appearing in Italian opera audiences in London. The term “encore,” derived from the French word meaning “again,” was later adopted in the English language with the same meaning as the Italian word “ancora,” which means “again.” In other European countries like France, Germany, or Italy, the term “bis” is commonly used, which translates to “twice” in English.⁴² In the past, encores were often improvised performances based on a given theme.⁴³

The practice of encores became popular in the 19th century when virtuoso pianists would frequently perform difficult and virtuosic pieces to showcase their technical prowess. Today, encores continue to be a common feature of piano recitals, serving to demonstrate different styles, moods, pay tribute to specific composers or performers, and engage the audience. Pianists often choose their encore piece based on the mood and energy of the audience, opting for well-known or easily recognizable pieces to keep the energy high.

Furthermore, the encore provides an opportunity for pianists to showcase their personal style and highlight specific techniques and skills. It is important to note that encores are not always planned in advance, and pianists may spontaneously decide to play an encore based on the audience's reaction to the main program. Overall, the encore tradition adds an element of excitement, surprise, and success to piano performances, creating a deeper connection between the pianist and the audience through the shared experience of music.

⁴² The Cross-Eyed Pianist: More please! the art of the piano encore (The Cross-Eyed Pianist, 2017), 27.

⁴³ Janet Gail Steward: The encore piece for piano from 1920 to 1990: Historical overview and programing patterns (Ball State University, 1991), 82.

As encores have gained popularity, they have also become a means of communication with the audience. Typically performed at the end of a concert and not listed on the program, encores consist of one or several short pieces, depending on the audience's reaction and the pianist's preparation.

Encore pieces in piano performances often exhibit certain characteristics that contribute to their effectiveness and impact. Here are some key attributes commonly associated with piano encores: Showcasing virtuosity, expressive and emotional range, familiarity and recognition, contrast and variety, captivating melodies or rhythms, brief duration.

Encore pieces are often chosen to demonstrate the pianist's technical skill and mastery of the instrument. They may feature intricate passages, rapid runs, challenging leaps, or demanding pianistic techniques such as octaves or trills.

Encore pieces can evoke a wide range of emotions, from tender and lyrical to passionate and fiery. They may explore contrasting moods and dynamics, captivating the audience with their expressive power.

Encore choices often include well-known and beloved compositions that the audience can easily recognize and appreciate. These pieces may have iconic melodies or themes that resonate with listeners, evoking a sense of nostalgia or familiarity.

Encore selections frequently provide a contrast to the main program. They may differ in style, character, or tempo, adding variety and excitement to the overall performance. This contrast can create a refreshing change of atmosphere and engage the audience in a different musical experience. A questionnaire conducted in the past on encore repertoire preparation, which received 107 responses from active or retired performing artists, piano faculties, and others, revealed that pianists tend to plan the first encore piece to contrast in character or mood

with the ending piece on the program. Pianists also aim to impress the audience and provide an uplifting and emotionally moving experience.⁴⁴

Encore pieces often feature memorable and catchy melodic lines or rhythmic patterns that capture the audience's attention and leave a lasting impression. These musical elements can create a sense of immediacy and connection with the listeners.

Encores are typically short in duration, usually lasting no more than a few minutes. Their brevity allows for a concise yet impactful musical statement that leaves the audience wanting more.

By selecting encore pieces that embody these characteristics, pianists can captivate the audience, add an extra dimension to their performance, and create a memorable conclusion to their recital.

The decision to give an encore as a pianist is typically based on several factors, including the audience response, emotional impact, spontaneity and connection, and the overall success of the performance.

A positive and enthusiastic audience response is often a strong indication that an encore would be well-received. Such as applause, standing ovations, and persistent clapping are signs that the audience is engaged and desires more. Pay attention to the level of excitement and enthusiasm in the room to decide if an encore would be appreciated.

If the performance has deeply touched the audience and created a strong emotional connection, it may be appropriate to offer an encore. Moments of great beauty, intensity, or emotional release can leave the listeners longing for more. Evaluating the emotional impact of the piano performance can guide the decision to provide an encore.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 70.

Sometimes, the decision to give an encore can be spontaneous, inspired by the energy and connection between the performer and the audience. If there is a strong bond and mutual appreciation, offering an encore can be a way to further deepen that connection and create a memorable moment for both performer and audience.

To evaluate the effect of an encore, pianists can observe the audience's reaction during and after the additional piece. Look for continued engagement, heightened excitement, and further applause. A positive response, such as sustained applause or standing ovations, indicates that the encore has successfully enhanced the overall concert experience.

It is worth noting that while encores are generally seen as a positive addition to a performance, it is important to be mindful of an encore should always be genuine and driven by the desire to create a memorable and satisfying musical experience for the audience.

When it comes to repertoire selection, here are some successful contrasting examples of encores:

Ligeti's etude No.13: "L'escalier du diable" is a challenging and complex piece that explores devilish technical demands on the piano. It features rapid, cascading passages and intricate rhythms, creating a sense of virtuosic intensity.

Franz Liszt's "La Campanella" is a famous showpiece for piano that demands extraordinary dexterity and agility. It is inspired by Niccolò Paganini's violin Caprice No. 3 and showcases the pianist's technical prowess through its rapid and brilliant bell-like passages.

Kapustin's Intermezzo in D-flat Major, op.40, no.7 is a jazz-inspired composition with a blend of classical and modern elements. It features syncopated rhythms, bluesy harmonies, and virtuosic improvisatory sections, creating a captivating and energetic performance.

Scriabin's Nocturne for the left hand, op.9, no.2 is a beautiful and introspective piece written specifically for the left hand. It showcases the pianist's ability to create expressive melodies and rich harmonies, providing a unique and hauntingly melodic encore option.

Prokofiev's Toccata, op.11 is a dynamic and fiery composition that demands precision and power from the performer. It features fast and rhythmic passages with contrasting sections of lyrical melodies, making it a thrilling and impressive choice for an encore.

Franz Liszt's "Widmung" is also a popular and successful choice for an encore due to its emotional impact, familiarity, technical showcase, romantic connection, and musical beauty. Its combination of heartfelt expression and virtuosic elements creates a captivating experience that can leave the audience enthralled and appreciative.

These examples showcase the variety of encores that pianists can choose from, ranging from virtuosic and energetic to lyrical and expressive pieces. Successful encores create a memorable and enjoyable experience, leaving the audience with a sense of awe, emotional resonance, and delight.

In conclusion, the encore serves as a vital component of a recital, fostering an engaging interaction and communication between the pianist and the audience. The continuous applause and enthusiastic response from the audience, combined with the pianist's response through encore music, create a chemical effect and tension that contribute to the recital's success and climactic moments. Based on the analysis presented, encore pieces exhibit the following characteristics: 1) They are representative of the composer's unique musical style. 2) They possess distinct and noticeable characteristics, ranging from cuteness and tenderness to passion and fury. 3) They showcase virtuosity, highlighting various piano skills and techniques such as octaves, fast running scales, and dramatic chord progressions. 4) They may incorporate elements

of folk music or exoticism, adding a touch of cultural diversity and intrigue. 5) They feature notable and impressive melodic lines or rhythmic momentum, capturing the audience's attention and leaving a lasting impression. 6) They are typically short in duration, usually lasting no longer than five minutes. 7) It is common for pianists to perform one to three encore pieces.

By carefully selecting encore pieces that encompass these elements, pianists can enhance the overall concert experience, leaving a memorable impact on the audience.

8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this thesis aims to assist piano players in achieving successful recitals by analyzing the extra-musical elements involved. Drawing upon my own experience as a live performer, as well as studying the live performance videos of renowned pianists and referencing scientific evidence, I have developed a comprehensive handbook to guide musicians towards higher concert quality and success.

Throughout this study, I have discussed the non-musical elements in a chronological order, covering pre-performance preparation, during the piano performance, and post-performance considerations. Under the pre-performance section, I have explored the psychological and dietary aspects that help piano players prepare effectively. During the piano performance, I have thoroughly examined a range of elements, encompassing both psychological and physical factors, and have presented corresponding solutions to address each challenge. Additionally, through the analysis and comparison of live recital videos featuring renowned pianists from diverse backgrounds, I have identified and summarized the key extra-musical elements that significantly contribute to the success of a piano recital.

Furthermore, I have explored the interaction with the audience during the performance and post-performance such as speech and encore, recognizing its importance in enhancing the overall concert experience. Each point presented in this thesis is supported by compelling scientific evidence and examples. Ultimately, the findings reveal that these non-musical elements in pre-performance, during performance, and post-performance all play a significant role in achieving a successful piano recital.

By understanding and implementing these extra-musical elements, piano players can elevate their performances and create memorable experiences for both them and their audiences.

It is my hope that this research serves as a valuable resource and guide, fostering greater confidence and excellence among musicians as they embark on their recital journeys.

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APPENDIX A. LANG LANG BIOGRAPHY⁴⁵

Lang Lang is a leading figure in classical music today – as a pianist, educator and philanthropist he has become one of the world’s most influential and committed ambassadors for the arts in the 21st century. Equally happy playing for billions of viewers at the 2008 Olympic Opening Ceremony in Beijing or just for a few hundred children in the public schools, he is a master of communicating through music.

Heralded by the New York Times as “the hottest artist on the classical music planet”, Lang Lang plays sold-out concerts all over the world. He has formed ongoing collaborations with conductors including Sir Simon Rattle, Gustavo Dudamel, Daniel Barenboim and Christoph Eschenbach and performs with all the world’s top orchestras. Lang Lang is known for thinking outside the box and frequently steps into different musical worlds. His performances at the GRAMMY Awards with Metallica, Pharrell Williams or jazz legend Herbie Hancock were watched by millions of viewers.

For about a decade Lang Lang has contributed to musical education worldwide. In 2008 he founded the Lang Lang International Music Foundation aimed at cultivating tomorrow’s top pianists, championing music education at the forefront of technology, and building a young audience through live music experiences. In 2013 Lang Lang was designated by the Secretary General of the United Nations as a Messenger of Peace focusing on global education.

Lang Lang started playing the piano aged three, and gave his first public recital before the age of five. He entered Beijing’s Central Music Conservatory aged nine, and won First Prize at the International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians at 13. He subsequently went to Philadelphia to study with legendary pianist Gary Graffman at the Curtis Institute of Music. He

⁴⁵ Lang, Lang, "Biography," accessed June 28, 2023.

was seventeen when his big break came, substituting for André Watts at the Gala of the Century, playing Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Christoph Eschenbach: he became an overnight sensation and the invitations started to pour in.

Lang Lang's boundless drive to attract new audiences to classical music has brought him tremendous recognition: he was presented with the 2010 Crystal Award in Davos and was picked as one of the 250 Young Global Leaders by the World Economic Forum. He is also the recipient of honorary doctorates from the Royal College of Music, the Manhattan School of Music and New York University. In December 2011, he was honoured with the highest prize awarded by the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China and received the highest civilian honours in Germany (Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany) and France (Medal of the Order of Arts and Letters). In 2016 Lang Lang was invited to the Vatican to perform for Pope Francis. He has also performed for numerous other international dignitaries, including four US presidents and monarchs from many nations.

APPENDIX B. EVGENY KISSIN BIOGRAPHY⁴⁶

Evgeny Kissin was born in Moscow in October 1971 and began to play by ear and improvise on the piano at the age of two. At six years old, he entered a special school for gifted children, the Moscow Gnessin School of Music, where he was a student of Anna Pavlovna Kantor, who has remained his only teacher. At the age of ten, he made his concerto debut playing Mozart's Piano Concerto K. 466 and gave his first solo recital in Moscow one year later. He came to international attention in March 1984 when, at the age of twelve, he performed Chopin's Piano Concertos 1 and 2 in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory with the Moscow State Philharmonic under Dmitri Kitaenko. This concert was recorded live by Melodia, and a two-LP album was released the following year. During the next two years, several Kissin performances in Moscow were recorded live and five more LPs were released by Melodia.

Kissin's first appearances outside Russia were in 1985 in Eastern Europe, followed a year later by his first tour of Japan. In 1987 he made his West European debut at the Berlin Festival. In 1988 he toured Europe with the Moscow Virtuosi and Vladimir Spivakov and also made his London debut with the London Symphony Orchestra under Valery Gergiev. In December of the same year he performed with Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic in a New Year's concert which was broadcast internationally, with the performance repeated the following year at the Salzburg Easter Festival. Audio and video recordings of the New Year's concert were made by Deutsche Grammophon.

In 1990 Kissin made his first appearance at the BBC Promenade Concerts in London and that same year made his North American debut, performing both Chopin piano concertos with

⁴⁶ Evgeny, Kissin. "Biography." Accessed June 28, 2023.

the New York Philharmonic conducted by Zubin Mehta. The following week he opened Carnegie Hall's Centennial season with a spectacular debut recital, which was recorded live by BMG Classics.

Musical awards and tributes from around the world have been showered upon Kissin. In 1987 he received the Crystal Prize of the Osaka Symphony Hall for the best performance of the year 1986 (which was his first performance in Japan). In 1991 he received the Musician of the Year Prize from the Chigiana Academy of Music in Siena, Italy. He was special guest at the 1992 Grammy Awards Ceremony, broadcast live to an audience estimated at over one billion, and became Musical America's youngest Instrumentalist of the Year in 1995. In 1997 he received the prestigious Triumph Award for his outstanding contribution to Russia's culture, one of the highest cultural honors to be awarded in the Russian Republic, and again, the youngest-ever awardee. He was the first pianist to be invited to give a recital at the BBC Proms (1997), and, in the 2000 season, was the first concerto soloist ever to be invited to play in the Proms opening concert. In May 2001 Kissin was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Music by the Manhattan School of Music. In December 2003 in Moscow, he received the Shostakovich Award, one of Russia's highest musical honors. In June 2005, he was awarded an Honorary Membership of the Royal Academy of Music in London. He was recently awarded the 2005 Herbert von Karajan Music Prize. Evgeny Kissin is Honorary doctor of the Hong Kong University, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Ben Gurion University in Beer Sheba.

Mr. Kissin's recordings have also received numerous awards and accolades, having contributed significantly to the library of masterpieces recorded by the world's greatest performers. Past awards have included the Edison Klassiek in The Netherlands, Grammy awards, and the Diapason d'Or and the Grand Prix of La Nouvelle Academie du Disque in France.

APPENDIX C. YUJA WANG BIOGRAPHY⁴⁷

Critical superlatives and audience ovations have continuously followed Yuja Wang's dazzling career. The Beijing-born pianist, celebrated for her charismatic artistry and captivating stage presence, is set to achieve new heights during the 2019-20 season, which features recitals, concert series, as well as season residencies and extensive tours with some of the world's most venerated ensembles and conductors. Season highlights include Yuja's year-long "Artist Spotlight" at the Barbican Centre, where she curates and performs in four distinct events: the first London performance of John Adams' newest piano concerto (premiered by her in Spring 2019) titled "Must the Devil Have All the Good Tunes?" with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Maestro Gustavo Dudamel, which they take to Boston and New York City; recitals featuring cellist Gautier Capuçon and clarinetist Andreas Ottensamer; and she concludes the residency with a solo recital.

In autumn of 2019, she tours China with the Wiener Philharmoniker, presenting concerts in Macao, Guangzhou, Shanghai, and Wuhan. The beginning of 2020 sees Yuja and Gautier Capuçon reuniting for a recital tour featuring eleven dates presented in Europe's premiere venues, including the Philharmonie de Paris and the Wiener Konzerthaus. She then embarks on an extensive solo recital tour, appearing in renowned concert halls throughout North America and Europe, including Carnegie Hall, Davies Symphony Hall, and the Het Concertgebouw, running from February to April.

Additionally, Ms. Wang will be the featured soloist with some of the leading orchestras of North America, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of Andris

⁴⁷ Wang, Yuja. "Biography." Accessed June 28, 2023.

Nelsons; the Toronto Symphony, conducted by Gustavo Gimeno; the San Francisco Symphony, led by Michael Tilson Thomas; and the Philadelphia Orchestra, under the musical direction of Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

“Her combination of technical ease, colouristic range and sheer power has always been remarkable ... but these days there is an ever-greater depth to her musicianship, drawing you into the world of each composer with compelling immediacy.” – Financial Times

Yuja Wang was born into a musical family in Beijing. After childhood piano studies in China, she received advanced training in Canada and at Philadelphia’s Curtis Institute of Music under Gary Graffman. Her international breakthrough came in 2007 when she replaced Martha Argerich as soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Two years later, she signed an exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon and has since established her place among the world’s leading artists, with a succession of critically acclaimed performances and recordings.

Yuja was named Musical America’s Artist of the Year in 2017.

APPENDIX D. MITSUKO UCHIDA BIOGRAPHY⁴⁸

2023 Grammy® Nominee for Best Classical Instrumental Solo for Beethoven's Diabelli Variations

One of the most revered artists of our time, Mitsuko Uchida is known as a peerless interpreter of the works of Mozart, Schubert, Schumann and Beethoven, as well for being a devotee of the piano music of Alban Berg, Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, and György Kurtág. She is Musical America's 2022 Artist of the Year, and a Carnegie Hall Perspectives artist across the 2022/3, 2023/4 and 2024/5 seasons. Her latest recording, of Beethoven's Diabelli Variations, was released to critical acclaim earlier this year, has been nominated for a Grammy® Award, and won the 2022 Gramophone Piano Award.

She has enjoyed close relationships over many years with the world's most renowned orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony, London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, and – in the US – the Chicago Symphony and The Cleveland Orchestra, with whom she recently celebrated her 100th performance at Severance Hall. Conductors with whom she has worked closely have included Bernard Haitink, Sir Simon Rattle, Riccardo Muti, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Vladimir Jurowski, Andris Nelsons, Gustavo Dudamel, and Mariss Jansons.

Since 2016, Mitsuko Uchida has been an Artistic Partner of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, with whom she is currently engaged on a multi-season touring project in Europe, Japan and North America. She also appears regularly in recital in Vienna, Berlin, Paris,

⁴⁸ Uchida, Mitsuko. "Biography." Accessed Jun 13, 2023.

Amsterdam, London, New York and Tokyo, and is a frequent guest at the Salzburg Mozartwoche and Salzburg Festival.

Mitsuko Uchida records exclusively for Decca, and her multi-award-winning discography includes the complete Mozart and Schubert piano sonatas. She is the recipient of two Grammy® Awards – for Mozart Concertos with The Cleveland Orchestra, and for an album of lieder with Dorothea Röschmann – and her recording of the Schoenberg Piano Concerto with Pierre Boulez and the Cleveland Orchestra won the Gramophone Award for Best Concerto.

A founding member of the Borletti-Buitoni Trust and Director of Marlboro Music Festival, Mitsuko Uchida is a recipient of the Golden Mozart Medal from the Salzburg Mozarteum, and the Praemium Imperiale from the Japan Art Association. She has also been awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society and the Wigmore Hall Medal, and holds Honorary Degrees from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In 2009 she was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

APPENDIX E. MARC-ANDRE HAMELIN BIOGRAPHY⁴⁹

“A performer of near-superhuman technical prowess” (The New York Times), pianist Marc-André Hamelin is known worldwide for his unrivaled blend of consummate musicianship and brilliant technique in the great works of the established repertoire, as well as for his intrepid exploration of the rarities of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. He regularly performs around the globe with the leading orchestras and conductors of our time, and gives recitals at major concert venues and festivals worldwide. Highlights of Mr. Hamelin’s 2022–2023 season include a vast variety of repertoire performed with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s at Carnegie Hall (Piano Quintet’s by Florence Price and Brahms), Berlin Philharmonic and Marek Janowski (Reger’s Piano Concerto), San Diego Symphony and Rafael Payare (Liszt’s Piano Concerto No. 2), Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Gustavo Gimeno (Messiaen’s Turangalila-Symphonie), Netherlands Philharmonic and Joshua Weilerstein (Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue), and Symphony Nova Scotia and Holly Mathieson (Grieg’s Piano Concerto). Recital appearances take Mr. Hamelin to Vienna, Chicago, Toronto, Montréal, Napa Valley, São Paulo, and Bogotá, among other venues across the world. The summer of 2022 included performances at many festivals including Caramoor with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, Tanglewood, Domaine Forget, La Jolla, Schubertiade, and Festival International Piano. Mr. Hamelin is an exclusive recording artist for Hyperion Records, where his discography spans more than 70 albums, with notable recordings of a broad range of solo, orchestral, and chamber repertoire. In January 2022, the label released a two-disc set of C. P. E. Bach’s sonatas and rondos that received wide critical acclaim and in June 2022, Hyperion released the two-disc set of William Bolcom’s “The

⁴⁹ Hamelin, Marc-André. “About.” Accessed June 28, 2023.

Complete Rags.” Mr. Hamelin has composed music throughout his career, with over 30 compositions to his name. The majority of those works—including the Etudes and Toccata on L’homme armé, commissioned by the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition—are published by Edition Peters. His most recent work, his Piano Quintet, was premiered in August 2022 by himself and the celebrated Dover Quartet at La Jolla Music Society. Mr. Hamelin makes his home in the Boston area with his wife, Cathy Fuller, a producer and host at Classical WCRB. Born in Montréal, he is the recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the German Record Critics’ Association, and has received seven Juno Awards and 11 Grammy nominations, and the 2018 Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano Performance from Northwestern University’s Bienen School of Music. In December 2020, he was awarded the Paul de Hueck and Norman Walford Career Achievement Award for Keyboard Artistry from the Ontario Arts Foundation. Mr. Hamelin is an Officer of the Order of Canada, a Chevalier de l’Ordre national du Québec, and a member of the Royal Society of Canada.

APPENDIX F. VLADIMIR ASHKENAZY BIOGRAPHY⁵⁰

“It is rare to find, in the same artist, the very highest levels of musical talent living alongside the deepest genuine humility. None has that rare combination in higher degree than Vladimir Ashkenazy.” Gramophone (London), June 2013

Among the foremost musical figures of our time, Vladimir Ashkenazy was born in Gorky in 1937. He began playing the piano at the age of six and was accepted at the Central Music School at the age of eight. He graduated from the Moscow Conservatory, having studied with Lev Oborin. He won second prize in the International Frédéric Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw in 1955, first prize in the Queen Elisabeth Music Competition in Brussels in 1956, and joint first prize with John Ogdon in the 1962 International Tchaikovsky Competition. Since then, he has built an extraordinary career, not only as one of the most renowned and revered pianists of our times, but as an artist whose creative life encompasses a vast range of activities and continues to offer inspiration to music-lovers across the world.

Conducting has formed the largest part of his activities for the past 20 years. Formerly Chief Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic (1998–2003) and Music Director of NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo (2004–7), from 2009 to 2013 he has served as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, collaborating on a number of exciting projects including composer festivals, major recording projects and international touring activities. His final concerts, in November 2013, featured Britten’s War Requiem.

Alongside these positions, Ashkenazy has continued his longstanding relationship with the Philharmonia Orchestra of which he was appointed Conductor Laureate in 2000. In addition

⁵⁰ Ashkenazy, Vladimir. "Biography." Vladimir Ashkenazy Official Website. Accessed June 13, 2023.

to his performances with the orchestra in London and around the UK each season, he appears with them worldwide – including tours throughout Europe and South America in 2014 – and has developed landmark projects such as Prokofiev and Shostakovich under Stalin in 2003 (a project which he also took to Cologne, New York, Vienna and Moscow) and Rachmaninov Revisited in 2002 at Lincoln Center, New York.

Ashkenazy also holds the positions of Music Director of the European Union Youth Orchestra, with which he tours each year, and Conductor Laureate of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra and the NHK Symphony Orchestra. He maintains strong links with a number of other major orchestras, including The Cleveland Orchestra (of which he was formerly Principal Guest Conductor) and Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin (Chief Conductor and Music Director 1988–96), as well as making guest appearances with many other major orchestras around the world.

Featuring an extensive repertoire that ranges from Bach to Bartók, Vladimir Ashkenazy's Decca discography comprises a vast number of recordings, many of which have been crowned with prizes. He received Grammy® awards among others for Beethoven's Piano Concertos with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Sir Georg Solti (1973), for Beethoven's Sonatas for Violin and Piano with Itzhak Perlman (1978), a Ravel programme of solo works (1985) and Shostakovich's Preludes and Fugues (1999).

To mark his 70th birthday in 2007, Decca issued a number of CDs and DVDs – both newly recorded and reissued from Ashkenazy's enormous Decca discography – which embrace his work as one of the most acclaimed pianists of his generation as well as over 25 years as a conductor. A programme of music for two pianos by Debussy and Ravel, recorded with his son Vovka Ashkenazy, was released in 2009; 2010 saw the release of Bach's Six Partitas, which

Vladimir Ashkenazy has recorded for the first time. A disc featuring Rachmaninov's Piano Sonata No. 1 and his Variations on a Theme of Chopin was issued in 2011, followed by another acclaimed piano duo recording – this one of Russian works – with Vovka Ashkenazy. A disc of lesser-known Rachmaninov solo works appeared in February 2013, with August bringing a new recording of Rachmaninov piano trios with violinist Zsolt-Tihamér Visontay and cellist Mats Lidström. Further releases in 2013, marking Ashkenazy's 50th anniversary as an exclusive Decca artist, included a 50-CD "original jacket collection" of his key recordings as pianist and conductor, a 2-CD selection entitled "The Art of Ashkenazy" and digital-only anthologies of Chopin and favourite encores.

2014 already saw the release of the album "Walking in the Air", in which Vladimir Ashkenazy (joined by Vovka Ashkenazy for two-piano works) plays music by his longtime friend Howard Blake – including pieces dedicated to the pianist – as well as an 11-CD set containing Rachmaninov's complete works for piano. The release of a solo Bach album, in which Ashkenazy plays works including the French Overture and the Italian Concerto, is scheduled for October 2014.

Ashkenazy has also been involved in several television projects, such as *Music After Mao*, filmed in Shanghai in 1979, and *Ashkenazy in Moscow* – a series of programmes marking his first visit in 1989 to the country of his birth since leaving the USSR in the 1960s. He has developed educational programmes with NHK TV including the 1999 *Superteachers*, in which he works with inner-city London school children, and in 2003–4 a documentary based around his Prokofiev and Shostakovich under Stalin project.