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SIGNS OF CYCLICITY OF THE SUITE “IMAGES” FOR THE PIANOFORTE OF CLAUDE DEBUSSY

The Article considers the Suite “Images” Claude Debussy in terms of having the cyclicality and independence of two series of plays (three). Features of both independence and individuality of each of the pieces of suite are identified. And a number of different communities (monothematicism, software, leith-shaped, leith-intonation, leith motivic, harmonic, textural, etc.) between the plays of “Images” is analyzed and identified. And thus there is a conclusion of the undoubted cycling of the Suite “Images” by Debussy.

Keywords: Cycle, independence, software, monothematicism, leith-intonation, leith-motif, leith-theme, leith-harmony, leith-structure.

In 1905 the composer created the first series of the pianoforte cycle “Images” (Images): “Reflections in the Water”, “Rameau’s Dedication” and “Movement”. And two years later - the second series of “Images”: “Bells through the Leaves”, and “the Moon Descends on the Place where Once There was a Temple”, and “Goldfish”. It should be noted an interesting phenomenon: all of these collections of pianoforte cycles consist of **three** pieces. *The tendency to create three pieces collected in a series under the general title is characteristic to the creativity of Debussy.* First it was revealed in other, **non-pianoforte** genres: in the songs of Debussy – “Three Melodies” 1891, where the first series contained “Gallant Celebration”, 1892; “Songs of Bilitis”, 1807); and the second series of “Gallant Festivals”, 1904 (elephant Verlaine), also consisting of three songs contained “Naïve”, “Faun” and “Sentimental Conversation”. At the same time, a second series of plays “Three Melodies” is different from the first one not only in the choice of texts and their interpretation, as well as in extremely well done vocal declamation. Thus, “the young impulses”, typical of the first series of plays, are replaced with “sad concentration and even some tenderness” [16, p. 479], and are filled with painful experiences. In 1904 Debussy wrote another little song cycle – “Three Songs of France”, which included the following songs: “Weather dropped Its Coat” and “As Plezans Died” - in the words of Charles of Orleans and – “Grotto” – in the words of Tristan L’Ermita. A cycle consisting of three scenes in the symphonic music of Debussy is also known - they

include “Nocturnes”, composed earlier in 1899.

A series of pianoforte pieces by Debussy created after the Prelude, Sarabande and Toccata, strengthen the program and visual and impressionistic tendencies. As you know, at the same time the composer’s creativity starts to loose connections with several genres of ancient music, and gloss the contrasts between the plays of the series. If in the collection “For Pianoforte” cyclical features are clearly felt (although they have been concretized by no one and nowhere), in the second series of “Images”, according to popular belief of the researchers musicologists they are hardly observed (misconception). Actually, the plays included in the “Images” of Claude Debussy are always talked about very casual and not particularly.

The *purpose* of our Article is to identify the features of embodiment of the meaningful drama and cycling in the interpretation of two series of pianoforte pieces of the suite “Images”. It raises an important question - whether the two notebooks of “Images” by Claude Debussy make the whole series of pianoforte pieces, i.e. a separate two-part series.

The *novelty* of the work: a holistic analysis of the “Images” by Claude Debussy made it possible to detect the leith-tonal, leith-motivic, and leith-harmonic, and other systems that integrate all the pieces and make a conclusion on a number of features that are inherent in cyclical works.

The *theoretical framework* is based on studies involving pianoforte works by Debussy and, in particular, its cycle of “Images” [4; 16]. Two series of pianoforte pieces “Images” by Claude Debussy are reviewed in monographs of Yu. Kremleva and I. Martynova [16; 19], as well as in the work of A. Alekseev “French Pianoforte Music” [3]. Two notebooks of “Images” for pianoforte of Claude Debussy belong to a number of the most popular and typical his pianoforte works, both in content and in a piano style. Here you can find not only picturesque pictures but also subtle deep meaningful program. The thematic material of plays, texture, and lado-harmonic content and select composer principle of development corresponds to the disclosure of this sophisticated world of nature. Often there are different ways of nature, and calm water surface.

Creating these works, Debussy did not seek to exact, concrete image of the world phenomena. Each landscape sketches contains certain emotional – some quiet, dreamy contemplation, majestic meditation; stern, gloomy mood can instantly be replaced with joy and even fun.

Originally intended for two pianofortes, Images represented a new “starting point” for the creativity of Claude Debussy. First he wrote what he meant “something different, trying to achieve the effect of reality ... that some idiots of Impressionism - words that are full abused, especially criticism, since they are not experiencing any shadow of doubt, connect it with the Turner’s name, the most skillful creator of mystery effects in the whole world of art” [31, p. 116].

The main thing in the pianoforte pieces by Debussy “Images” is a musical color, paints. The composer draws all the modern means of **harmony** to it, both traditional and new, showing extraordinary courage, imagination and ingenuity. For example, the play “Goldfish” is built on a combination of major-minor, and the play “Ring of Bells through the Leaves” is based on the whole-tone scales and there is almost no possibility of identifying specific tonal foundations.

But the feeling of the paint space is created in the plays “Images” not only by means of harmony, but also extremely rich and sophisticated pianoforte **texture**. The composer creates a multi-tiered harmonic score where all the voices on the one hand, are separated from one another, and do not form a total harmonic complex, and, on the other hand - all the lines are extremely logically blend, often expressing their richness.

Of course, first of all, you should find out what the composer meant under the name given to the work of the composer – “Images”." Let’s pay attention to the fact that the exception of the two plays of the first series - the second “Rameau’s Dedication”, i.e. Sarabande, and the third one – “Movement”, others - program. But this program of the plays by Debussy is in special, “Impressionist sense of the word”: not so much the music embodies the very image of the real world, how many fleeting, successive impressions that arise when contemplating” [19, 173]). This program “imagery” also combines the play “Images”.

The names of the plays – “Reflections in Water”, “Bells through the Leaves” already indicate the special features of the creative method of Debussy. Even when his plays have a more specific nature, such as “The Moon Descends on the Place where Once There was a Temple” and “Goldfish” - they still hide the subtle impressionistic tone painting that captures the changing impressions of the designated object of description and not the object itself.

In this regard the work “Images” is one of the most typical works of the art of impressionism (not by chance that in the works of Debussy’s followers, these “water”, “aquarium” and “ghostly night” soundscapes generated the greatest number of imitations, and then triggered a fierce attack – opposition of the representatives of the young French school). The plays themselves of both series have great artistic merit and still remain repertoire.

For example, the story of the first piece – “*Reflection in the Water*” - prompted a more picturesque than a music solution. But the aesthetics of Impressionism thought can erase a clear distinction between different types of art. Let’s recall Verlaine, who demanded from the poetry of “Music First”; Impressionist painters, who sometimes sought to make the landscape a means of transmission of mood, and so on. Therefore, there is nothing unusual in the conception of the composer, who created the “Reflection in the Water” - a work of exceptional colorful, revealing the author’s fondness for polyphonic harmonic complexes.

Common elements of melodic and harmonic intonations in the plays by Debussy are changing whole-tone scale and diatonic, diatonic and chromatic, textural complexity score, the diversity of rhythmic lines in it, fast play and flicker seconds, underlining moments of sounds non-accords, constant and endless fifths supports and endless various organ points, ostinato, etc. [16, p. 477]. The method of parallel motion of harmonies on the diatonic basis is becoming a favorite one - for example, the play “Reflection in the Water” and “Movement” - with their parallel fifths. In the future, this method “takes the value of one of the major ... In “The Moon, going down to the Temple” there are parallel moves by quart harmonies. The bright, clear sonorities start to predominate” [See. 4, p. 82].

Features of different genres are also felt in some plays of “Images” by Debussy. It is a genre of the *toccata*, which obviously can be felt in the third play – “**Movement**” – from the first series of “Images”. It has no dynamics and “space” latitude inherent in the same “Gardens in the Rain”. The action of “Movement” is as if localized in a small circle. By creating this image, the author has shown great ingenuity in relation to the invoice. Quint sequence occurs in the middle voices, moves from one octave to another, or transformed into sustained sounds that flows between figuration.

In the second series of “Images” there are not any plays similar to the *toccata* genre. As in the previous collections of plays Debussy concludes the last series *with a way of movement* – “Goldfish”. But the image of movement in this play has nothing to do with the stiff motor of the *toccata* rhythm. Tempo fluctuating movement in the play “Golden Fish” recalls a bizarre play of light and shadow in the aquarium, which is discarded flock frolicking fish. “Goldfish” with short melodic phrases, sounding on the background of the “babbling” passages painted with colorful comparison of Polymodality (major and minor thirds), the large and small seconds, creates a beautiful, literally fantastic, painting. Here the music is of beautifully visual nature, written with pure transparency and delicacy of watercolor paints.

Do the two notebooks of “Images” by Claude Debussy make the *whole series, i.e., a separate two-part cycle*? In our opinion the question is quite legitimate. We would have given an affirmative response. Let’s explain that our position. What unites all the plays “Images”? But initially let’s consider why the composer has not united all six plays in a single cycle.

Let’s try to understand the position of the composer. So:

1. Two notebooks of plays “Images” were created at different times - the first in 1905, the second - in 1907, although this in itself is not an indication for or against the cyclicity of the work.
2. The first play of the first series of plays is devoted to Maurice Ravel; and in the second Rameau’s Dedication is in the title of the play.
3. Once all three plays of the second series have a particular dedication

to:

- 1) Alexander Sharpane,
 - 2) Louis Lulu,
 - 3) Ricardo Vinyes - Spanish pianist, who actively promoted works by Debussy and Ravel.
4. In our view, it is important that the first three miniatures that make up the first series of plays continue the old, *early, genre searching* for creative ways composer. It is lyrical landscape, inspired by a painting of running water – “Reflection in the water ...”; it is a pastiche of an ancient dance type Sarabande – “Rameau’s Dedication” and rapidly-moving, as if the final, Etude-Toccata, filled with non-stop, few mechanical dynamism – “Movement”.
5. Three plays of the second series of “Clouds” have a more sophisticated language; more saturated certain decorative effects. These include sound images of landscapes and painted impressionist poetics.
6. It is in the second series of “Images” the composer enjoys writing on three staves (as it follows in the footsteps of Liszt). In Debussy such a three-line recording aims to create a high-rise, literally vibrating harmony, enrich the pedal effects, to achieve a multi-layer and multi-timbre sound. It is due to this that seasoned bass designed to disguise the nature of bright harmonic events and to create an atmosphere of uncertainty tone gets even a more important role than in the first series of plays, become.

So, all of the aforementioned is more consistent confirmation of independence of each series of plays of “Images” by Debussy. Here are some positions, which confirm our thought that the pianoforte pieces are combined:

1. What is in the process of deploying plays-images is their dynamics at various levels (initiation, communication with the imagery of earlier works, invoices and other complication.) - Could be evidence of the unity of the two series of “Images”.
2. In fact, all of the plays of “Images” are determined in a genre way. Only each piece of the first series of “Images” is more particularly determined **in a**

genre way by the composer himself:

- 1) “Reflections in the water ...” - lyrical landscape;
- 2) “Rameau’s Dedication” - a pastiche of old Sarabande enough free type;
- 3) «“Movement” - Etude-Toccata.

Sound, perhaps even sound representational landscapes are focused in the second series of plays.

3. All of the play “Images” are program, and united with a community to create a mood and excitement.
4. All the plays “Images” has orchestral thinking, manifested in the peculiarities of the texture and the principles of presentation of musical material: duplicate, floors, literally timbre combinations of thematic lines, music score of statement as to leith-timbre.
5. And the most important is the presence of **internal** leith-motifs, leith-images, different leith effects in every play “Images” create a whole **system of such linguistic turns**, which are passed through and all subsequent plays (for example, whole-tone scale movement). However, in two series of “Images” there is a **system of through leith-motifs, leith-images, leith-effects, which manifests itself at all levels and promotes integrity, and unity of all the plays.**
6. In the first play “Reflections in the water ...” appear three leith-motifs that will be cross-cutting in two series of “Images”, which creates a system **monothematicism** (in connection with which we have analyzed first play in such detail).
7. All these **leith-motifs** appear to us in various forms - are transformed in an intonation way and rhythmically, sound in inversion, contrary motion, handling contrary motion in various counterpoint.
8. All the pieces of the two notebooks “Images” are linked with variance of the used thematism (themes, motifs, themes, ringtones, themes replica) that creates a **monothematic interaction** and their frequent alignment counterpoints.
9. A special role is played by cross-cutting substantive authority of the point of

fifths, octaves, penetrating all the plays, i.e. **Leith harmonic** effects.

10. It is equally important in all different types of plays penetrating **ostinato**: thematic chord, configurational, background, helping to create the appropriate program images.

11. All plays have similar principles of relations of musical material: a constant repetition, variation, and sequention. And also there is triolnost pervading all.

It seems that the listed properties are enough to say that all pianoforte pieces of “Images” by Claude Debussy constitute a single cycle through.

The two notebooks of “Images” give a fairly clear idea of the mature pianoforte works by Debussy, new methods of his pianistic writing, and his harmonic style. With all the stylistic beauty, brightness and completeness, “Images” for pianoforte has not become an endpoint quest for the composer. His thoughts rushed forward - to further such works as “Children’s Corner”, and then to two Preludes notebooks belonging, no doubt, among the most significant achievements of the pianoforte art of our time.

But “Images” remains a milestone in the creative development of Debussy and still retain his artistic credibility.

We agree with the opinion of R. Kunitsky that “the artist’s contemplative attitude to nature was raised to a height of Debussy’s tragic irreconcilable conflict of the artist and the surrounding reality” [17, p. 74]. It is not accidently that in the beautiful sketches of the various phenomena of nature we hear motives of eternal *Dies irai*. Regarding the creative process of Claude Debussy, we refer to the opinion of P. Holmes: “... In composing music Debussy likened himself as an alchemist; extract from the silence of the enchanting sounds that caress the ear in his works, it was for him akin to magical effect. And most of all, he starts talking about his “Most recent experiments in musical alchemy” [31, p.101].

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