



# The “Representation” and “Music Image” in the Aesthetic Image of Music and Their Limitations

**Xin Sun**

School of Music, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China.

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\***Corresponding author:** Xin Sun, School of Music, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China.

## Abstract

The creation process of the aesthetic image of music involves the "meaning" that the subject expresses through its subjective initiative and the "image" that the object embodies in the subject's consciousness. Music relies on the sounds produced by musical instruments with a specific organizational structure to convey emotions and meanings, thereby stimulating people's imagination. The condensation of imagery is most prominent in music. First of all, it is the material that constitutes music that determines the ideality of aesthetic consciousness. The starting point of literary appreciation is the image organized in grammatical relations, and language serves as the "bridge" connecting the starting point to the formation of concepts. Music, on the other hand, begins with the sound of a specific organizational structure as the basis for appreciation activities and directly conveys emotions through the unique medium of sound. The art of music involves the fusion of "meaning" and "image". The "image" is embedded in the "musical image", representing the external world, human perception, and emotions, all interconnected in a meaningful way. When their modes of action reach the same structure, aesthetic experience emerges.

## Keywords

Music aesthetic, Image, Music image

## 1. Representation and image

In the works of psychology and music psychology, the image of perceived things reproduced in the brain is called perceptual image, and the image of perceived things reproduced in the brain is called memory image. This is the conventional interpretation of representation, which captures the most important essence of representation—intermediation, which is the "intermediate link" from perception to thinking. "An image is in any case more than a thought; it is a mass, or a collection, of thoughts that mingle and have vitality," and an accurate image "enables the emotion to find its equivalent" (Wu Lifu, 1983). Music is an art form that is based on the auditory level and relies on our synesthetic thinking. Auditory image is the perceptual pattern of sound. The development of a musical work is from its initial presentation to its fully tangible presentation, and the sound movement of music always expects to change from the "present" to the past. In this constantly passing sound, we intuitively perceive the "posture" of the sound image and feel the "beauty" of the movement of the music sound. When the audience listens to the music, they see all kinds of pictures. Most of this kind of music image is not an intuitive visual image. It is realized by the isomorphism between the dynamic mode of sound and the inherent mode of action of the scene in a certain scene. Through the associative effect from a certain sound transition to the fuzzy visual image. The figurative psychologist of visual art, Rudolf Arnheim, explains the use of works of art in his book *Art and Visual Perception*, which has implications for the understanding of music as art as well: "The work of art itself has a content, and all the colors and shapes involved in it are organized for the sole purpose of conveying that content, and only then can he truly understand why such a balanced form can infect him" (Rudolf Arnheim, 1954). The author believes that the presentation of visual

images in music aesthetics is inevitable, but it cannot be separated from auditory images.

Imagery emphasizes the importance of experience and subjective initiative. The image of things that have happened in the past retained in memory is essentially the image of objective things processed by the subject. While the image is based on the image, the subject is more focused on the idea with intentionality. The two have the same thing in that they are the mediators from perception to real thinking, while the image is richer in connotation than representation and is an advanced generalization of representation.

Therefore, the author makes a clear distinction between image and image. Image refers to the things experienced in the past that leave an impression in the memory. It can have preliminary generality and subjective tendency, but in essence, it is the legacy of the image of objective things, and the content is biased toward the object. Image is a new and intentional three-dimensional image in the subject's mind on the basis of a large number of images, it does not necessarily exist, and the content is biased to the subject's wishes and assumptions; The mental process or mental activity that produces the new image is what we call creative imagination. Image and image are also mediating links from perception to thinking. If an image is the primary intermediary in this process, the image is the secondary intermediary, the intermediary of a higher degree of generality than the image.

"As an art form, music has no concrete image to which it can refer, except sound" (Xu Ningling, 2019). The aesthetic consciousness of music is the product of the intuitionistic activity of the subject's intuitionistic object. It is both perceptual and rational and has strong and distinct subjective emotional characteristics. The conflict and tension generated within the music, the rendering of the texture organization form and the sound effect, the strength of the contrast between the voice parts, the opposition and consistency after the integration of various musical parameters, their climbing and disappearing, chasing and merging, have a kind of artistic conception consistent with the structure of external things. Music itself is an art form in which the whole is greater than the part, and the whole plays a role in making the audience resonate. In this way, the image appearing in the aesthetic consciousness of music is different from the general image, but a special image with rational factors and emotional colors. "Meaning" is more a certain emotional experience of the subject. From an epistemological point of view, "meaning" needs to be achieved by the understanding of the object, and has a certain concept in the cognitive stage with rational components. In other words, we can make a perceptive judgment on the content that we have not fully understood, while we can make a more profound rational judgment on the content that we have thoroughly understood. "Even the more profound rational analysis from the abstract to the concrete may be relatively vague abstractions that are not so clear in musical works" (Belfi, Ami M., 2019).

## 2. Musical images in musical works

In many musical works, composers have adopted some natural sound simulation techniques, such as the storm (Beethoven's "Tempest Sonata"), the lark's chirping (Balakirev's "Lark"), the ringing bell (Liszt's "Bell"); However, the limitation is that music can only imitate certain sounds that exist in reality, but cannot imitate the inner feelings caused by these sounds. For example, the image of the storm in Beethoven's Symphony in F Major's "Pastoral" is different from that in Rossini's Wilhelm Tell; The Pastoral Symphony was named by Beethoven himself to depict a lifelike "rural landscape". The former is the hero's real feeling of nature, while the latter is an inner storm caused by the issue of love. Even if there is an obvious title paragraph, there are differences in the transmission of the emotional connotation of music, which emphasizes the diversity of "music image" in music aesthetics.

Chinese contemporary composer Tan Dun takes "water", an important element of material composition, as an important theme of his musical expression. He integrates the aesthetic ideal and emotion of water music into the aesthetic image of water music based on the water music hall. "Guanzi Water Land", which first discusses the interplay of the palace, Shang, horn, Zheng, and Yu, also says: "What is water? The source of all things, the family of all beings, and the production of beauty and evil sages" (Guan Zhong, 770B.C) further affirms that water is the source of life and the root of all things. Tan Dun's water music includes pipa, percussion of a variety of water instruments, and temple bells and chimes. Tan Dun believes that the rhythm and rhythm of the water connect the ancient zen songs of Yuanjing Temple, the chanting of the monks' evening classes, and the melody of the dialogue between Chinese and Western music in the Water Music Hall.

The "image" here is the carrier of the "meaning". The image of hearing is organically integrated with the image of inner activity as if it has become the "music image" with the meaning of the visual image. The inner image is the experience of inner activity obtained by the subject, which forms an image in the four-dimensional space in the subject's mind, which is similar to some of the physical images we feel in reality. Therefore, I believe that the "music

image" that appears in the subject's mind through listening to the sound comes from the objective world, including the subject himself. Only by looking for sounds in nature can we capture the most wonderful musical notes in the world and perceive the beauty of rhyme and sound that are integrated into the landscape, which is the true soul of music close to nature. Li Shuming once put forward: "The core of" On Sound "is" music as the body, with the heart as the main ", that is, "heart" is the subject and content of music, "Yin" refers to the movement of music, it is the object and form of music, "Yin" in the sorrow of music, the harmony of subject and object constitute the overall structure of music art" (Han Mei, 2006) is also the image reflected in the subject's mind, which absorbs the concrete image of real things, thus forming the aesthetic image of music. However, when discussing the production process of a specific music image, the ingredients of "music image" come from different sources, such as the overlaying of sound effects or the layer-by-layer dyeing of a single timbre, and the resulting properties are also different.

### 3. The limitations of music aesthetic image

In Susan Lange's opinion, to regard "image" as "the reproduction of perceptual impression" is to ignore one of the important properties of "image", that is the symbolic nature of "image". It explains why the perceptual characteristics of the "image" are so vague and incomplete that it is almost impossible to describe them, and also explains why its perceptual image does not resemble the real image of the thing it reproduces (Susanne K. Anger, 1983). Starting from the symbolic image, she put forward "the basic illusion of art" and said: "Every kind of art can lead to a special field of experience, and this special field of experience is actually a certain kind of real image. In Emotion and Form, I have called this special field of experience "basic illusion", and every art has its own basic illusion." This so-called illusion of art is the system of aesthetic imagery. The image advocated by Imagists is a kind of fictional image that focuses on the thought and emotional expression of the subject, which is basically consistent with the aesthetic image advocated by us.

"When music exists as a conceptual content, it obviously does not have a clear direction in nature, that is, we say the fictional art world" (Feng Xiaogang, 1997). From music, what we feel more is an emotional atmosphere, a trend of light and dark, or a kind of association and imagination developed from time level. When the composer is creating, he gradually constructs a set of music aesthetic image systems in his mind based on the feelings in real life, so as to convey the music image. If we are looking for the concrete, the exact story, it is not the art of music. Due to the uncertainties of music, although we can generalize the feelings of a musical work as a whole, the details are often vague and uncertain. A symphonic work contains many plots, and the grand narrative brings shocking auditory effects. When we open the score, we can also feel that it is a multi-level and multi-dimensional complex, whose whole is far more than the sum of its parts. In the art of music, most of the works are not composed of a single aesthetic image, but a complex aesthetic image system. "In order to be different from the music aesthetic image in the musician's mind, the image system in music works is temporarily called music image" (Jin Xiaoxi & Liu Ye, 2021). Just as the complex biological phenomena in the biological world are all determined by the basic nature of "cells", the complex phenomena in the whole aesthetic field of music are all determined by the basic nature of "cells" such as the aesthetic image of music. The core of the beauty of music art lies in the fact that the subjective emotion of the subject can be integrated into the things and forms existing in the concrete reality, and the emotional response can be aroused again through this real feeling.

The problem of shaping music image is more about "image" rather than "concrete". "The image created by the subject's emotions and inner activities is only the image" (Han Ting, 2021). In some music books, the content of the music works is concretized, and the music material is divided into "insects", "blue sky", etc. In guiding the audience to understand the connotation of the music work, the approximate metaphor is reasonable. However, if we blindly correspond one by one, the subject will not be able to form a complete music aesthetic image system in his mind on the basis of obtaining a large number of images from reality, forming a personalized understanding of music images, just directly interpret and identify it, will lose the image transformation process in music aesthetic activities, and finally lose the perception of music beauty.

### 4. Conclusion

Lu Xun said: "Take one end and transform it or grow it until it is sufficient to express my meaning almost completely" (Lu Xun, 1957) here, "transformation" and "hair generation", together with integration and deformation, are really expressions that conform to the characteristics of musical thinking. The composer obtains a large number of images

from life, and, triggered by certain aesthetic feelings, transforms, generates, and transforms the acquired images, thus generating a system of musical aesthetic images in his mind, which is then conveyed by musical language (melody) and transformed into materialized artistic images for interpretation and identification. This is the whole process of the movement transformation of the image system in the artistic activities of music, that is, the dynamic structure of the music's aesthetic image. This dynamic structure constitutes the whole content of music activities.

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