



Anime Piano Music

Exploring The Potential of Responsive Pedagogy and The Reactions of Classically-Trained Pianists



Background

- Anime is becoming increasingly popular.
- Arrangements of Anime Music resulted in the creation of Anime Piano Music.
- Animenz is one of the most well-known Anime Pianists and Arrangers.
- Lack of academic scholarship on these topics.

Definitions

- **Anime:** A Japanese animation style that is featured in films or television shows.
- **Anime Music:** Music that originates from Japanese animation.
- **Anime Piano Music:** Piano music that has an anime origin.
- **Responsive Pedagogy:** A student-centred education approach that adapts teaching methods and contents to the needs of the student.

Research Questions

- What are the reactions of classically trained pianists in the faculty of music to Anime Piano Music?
- Is there the potential for responsive pedagogy and integration of Anime Piano Music into piano education?

Methodology

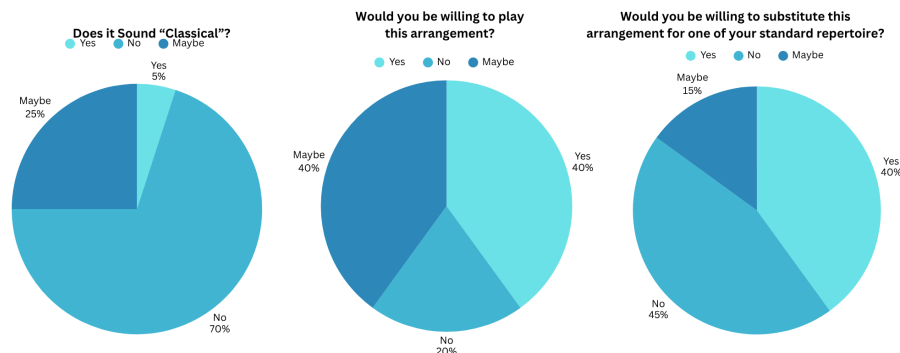
- In February 2024, I conducted a survey. This was done in cooperation with the piano faculty.
- Opened to piano majors and people with strong piano backgrounds.
- Asked to listen to Animenz's arrangement of My Dearest.
- Asked a series of background questions, Yes/No, and short answers questions.

Participants

- 20 Responses: 16 Bachelors, 3 Masters, 1 Doctorate.
- 17 Students, 2 Staff, 1 UoT Alum.
- The vast majority of participants were piano majors.
- All participants indicated they were or are in a classically streamed music program.
- Wide Variety of Specialization.
 - Performance, Piano Pedagogy and Compositions were the most common ones.
 - Music Education, Comprehensive, History and Theory were the next most common.

Results and Themes

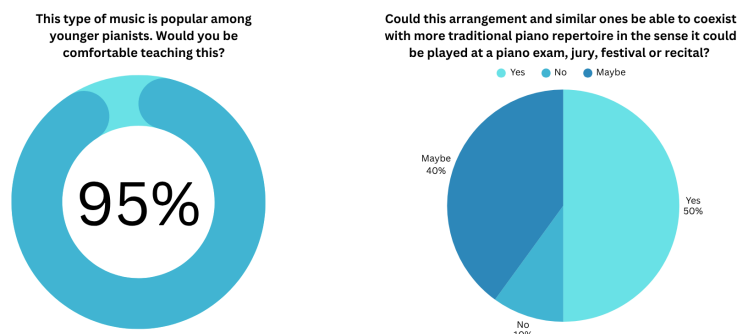
- **100%** of participants have heard of Anime and Anime Music while **95%** have heard of Anime Piano Music.
- The majority of participants had a **positive impression** of Animenz's arrangement of *My Dearest*.
- The majority of participants thought that the arrangement was difficult and **required a high level of technical proficiency**.
- Many of the participants said it reminded them of a variety of different genres, composers and styles of music. "Classical" aesthetics, techniques, styles and composers were mentioned.



“I grew up playing Animenz, it used to be what I do for fun during the summer breaks. I also wish to play Animenz for my repertoire next year. But there are many problems such as my piano professor is not very likely to approve it, and it is also technically difficult for me to play well.”

-Anonymous Faculty of Music Pianist

- "Classical" techniques, styles and aesthetics do not automatically make a piece "classical".
- When push came to shove, most participants who chose "Maybe" then chose "No".
- Due to various reasons: Wanted to play other similar pieces, worried whether it would be accepted by music institutions or by their piano teachers, too difficult, needed more context.



Discussion

- Classicization and its effects on non-Western art music.
 - Could Classicization increase the accessibility of non-Western art music in classical institutions?
- The role of arrangements throughout music history.
 - Increase accessibility of underperformed music.
 - Promote the works of underrepresented composers.
 - An outlet for the display of piano virtuosity.
 - Advance the field of piano technique.
- Many of the participants referred to this arrangement as a piece which shows how we are used to playing music written for our specific instrument.
 - Should learning piano arrangements and transcriptions become part of piano education?

Conclusion

- Anime Piano Music, more specifically the arrangements of Animenz has the potential to be utilized in Piano Education.
- There is the potential for responsive pedagogy as this type of music is becoming popular among younger pianists.
- There is a clear interest in this type of music among pianists at the Faculty of Music.
- The music is both difficult and pleasant to listen to.
- Piano professors and music institutions hold great influence over a student's repertoire and can influence whether this genre becomes accepted.

Next Steps

- More research should be conducted on this topic due to the lack of academic scholarship.
 - I plan to continue this project during my Masters and Doctoral years.
- Advocate for the public performances and promotion of Anime Piano Music.
 - Normalize playing this kind of music.

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