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**Aural and Visual Imagery in Performance of the  
Preludes of Claude-Achille Debussy and Shengjing  
Liao**



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**Imagens auditivas e visuais na apresentação dos  
prelúdios de Claude-Achille Debussy e Shengjing  
Liao**

Dissertação apresentada à Universidade de Aveiro para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Música, realizada sob a orientação científica da Professora Doutora Shao Xiao Ling, Professora Auxiliar do Departamento de Comunicação e Arte da Universidade de Aveiro



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**palavras-chave**

multimédia performance, imagens auditivas e visuais, Shengjing Liao, Claude-Achille Debussy, Piano Prelude

**resumo**

Nos estudos actuais relacionados com música e imagem, vários estudiosos reconheceram que existe uma ligação estreita entre estas áreas, o que pode afectar uma sinestesia de percepções sensoriais. Quando as sensações auditivas e visuais estão bem ligadas, a conformidade provocada pode complementar os significados existentes ou acrescentar novos significados.

Este trabalho explora a confluência do imaginário auditivo e visual através da análise e execução dos prelúdios para piano de dois compositores, nomeadamente Claude Debussy e Shengjing Liao. No ângulo de visão específico, estes compositores estão culturalmente separados entre o Ocidente e o Oriente, mas estão ligados pelas imagens utilizados nas suas músicas. A nossa investigação centra-se na revelação da imagem musical e da imagem visual, na perspectiva da pianista, enquanto o sentido musical é transformado em pequenos vídeos, através da recriação da pianista, e enquanto esta recriação de imagens visuais é expressa musicalmente pela performance do piano para alcançar a complementação mútua.

**keywords**

Multimedia performance, aural and visual imagery, Shengjing Liao, Claude-Achille Debussy, Piano Prelude

**abstract**

In the current studies related to music and image, several scholars have recognized that there is a narrow link between these areas, which can affect a synesthesia of sensory perceptions. When aural and visual sensations are well connected, the conformity provoked can complement existing meanings or add new meanings.

This article explores the confluence of aural and visual imagery by analyzing and performing the piano preludes of two composers, namely Claude Debussy and Shengjing Liao. In the specific angle of view, these composers are culturally separated from the West and East, but imagery connected in their music writings. Our research focuses on the revelation of the musical image and the visual image, in the perspective of the piano performer, while the musical sense is transformed into short videos, through the recreation of the pianist, and while this recreation of visual images is expressed musically by piano performance to achieve the mutual complementation.

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## 1. Introduction

The work presented in this research paper is an Artistic Project, (the subject being piano performance), in the Masters' Degree in Music of the Aveiro University. This paper will elaborate on the author's musical performance project. Additionally, a support text based on pertinent theoretical reflection will serve to explain the options taken in the light of a current theoretical framework, as well as the description of the objectives, methods applied, and the conclusion of the research expectations.

As a professional piano performance student, I have interpreted many works of composers from different times and different countries. Among them, Claude Debussy has become one of the XX century Western composers who received my appreciation and observance. The flowing pictures in his music and the looming oriental tone-colors deeply engaged me. I particularly appreciate the 24 Preludes that Debussy created for the piano. The reason being that each of these pieces have a short, but delicate form at the same tempo, the free flow of phrases and rhythm in the musical texture, and the plasticity characteristic of the musical narrative reflect a natural image that has been highly admired by scholars and spectators around the world.

Upon proposing my intentions to study and play Debussy's Piano Preludes, my piano professor suggested I assemble Debussy's opus with the works of a modern Chinese composer. The Portuguese musical academic lack of knowledge and research on modern Chinese piano works and composers may prove an obstacle, however, the performance and research of the works of two XX century composers in the different time and space will allow for both Eastern and Western audiences to somehow recognize and understand the span and interworking in these musical compositions.

Coincidentally, I found the Album of 24 Preludes of the Chinese composer Shengjing Liao. This work is created following the 24 seasonal and amorous scenes of the Chinese solar calendar. At the same time, Liao made in-depth research and organization of the Chinese traditional pentatonic scale system and embodied 24 different tones in his preludes.

Although my project design is still in its initial stage, on the grounds of determining the innovation value of the piano recital, remaining performance studies. I have discovered some similarities in the preludes of these two composers, which piqued my interest and enthusiasm to further study and research the subject. One of the core reasons for my

curiosity and enthusiasm are how to connect the imagery to my recreation of these preludes. Both Debussy and Liao created imagery for their preludes, portraying their insights into musical colours, nuances of the inner layers, as well as the frameworks of the harmonic, rhythmic and melodic textures. My undertaking will be in exploring if these musical components and sensibilities could, in some way, be re-created by a performer, using other forms of artistic expression, especially related to imagery in video clips.

Personally, I have always had a keen interest in the field of visual arts, especially with regard to photography and web design techniques. Therefore, upon commencement of my master's degree in Music studies, I additionally enrolled in the optional discipline of Photographic Studies. Considering that my research scope is focused on artistic and performance analysis, with a focus on incorporating creative and critical products for the actual academic circle, my aim is to combine the music sensorial sphere with that of the visual sensorial field and refine a renewed scenic stage for the audience's auditory experience through resonance and appreciation for two-way communication.

## **2. Research Objective**

### **2.1 Problematic**

In my endeavor to investigate and understand the elements involved in my study into performance I need to confront the emergent challenge, which is how complementary points of juxtaposition of knowledge and interdependence could exist in a performance. In my opinion, the artistic research will be accomplished by joining tempo together with the quality of the artistic performances. It could be a single artistic experience or interdisciplinary artistic experiences. The artists/researchers could perform, reform and transform what they conceive and transmit this “action knowledge” to the audience. This kind of performance not only require an artistic action, but also an artistic knowledge that will create new interpretations. Therefore, the most important step during the research process is how I will achieve favorable aural and visual quality in my interpretation of the musical imagery.

In defining so many elements of my research, I anticipate the following difficulties and potential problems:

- During my research and preparation process, how can I achieve the fitting quality in the musical interpretation of the music, as well as the creation of visual imagery?

As music is instantaneous, the state and effect of each performance will be different. The quality of the music prepared for the performance depends on the composer's thought, musical style and technical analysis.

- How do I connect the images I create with the music I play with high quality preparation?
- How do I reach the Portuguese audience and increase their interest and understanding of the Chinese music I play during my performance. Furthermore, how do I make the Western music I play clearer and appealing to a Chinese audience?
- During my performance, which will combine the videos and pictures I have created with my chosen pieces, how can gain the empathy of the audience, so that they can gain an understanding of the music through my eyes and emotional interpretation of it?

## 2.2 Objectives

The general objective of my artistic project is in response to the challenges mentioned above: to achieve an artistic project design using the two sensory areas of the performer and create an innovative piano recital on stage; realizing this artistic project with the highest quality to achieve the positive resonance and empathy of the audience during the performance action.

To realize these objectives, it will be necessary to obtain specific targets such as:

- A deep understanding of the music works of Debussy and Liao to successfully portray their thoughts and aesthetics.
- Achieve my interpretation of the combined aural and visual imagination to create original pictures and videos to better express my imagination and feelings.
- The opportunity to coerce audiences from different countries to empathize with my music and presentation intentions, especially concerning the Portuguese audience, as most of them have a limited understanding of traditional Chinese culture. Only playing Chinese music will make my message difficult to understand, therefore I find it necessary to juxtapose Western music of the same genre to create a richer and more interesting the performance.
- Offering the audience, a two-way communication on the performance stage, allowing them to feel my playing while witnessing a visual into my mind, thereby increasing their understanding of the musical works and creating a clearer perception of the performer.



### **3. Literature Review**

In defining the theme of my research, I found fewer books and materials available as a performer since this is an interdisciplinary study. To combine all the elements of my research and to have connections between all of them, therefore, I found 3 guiding pillars to better systematize my research. They are Shengjing Liao, Claude Debussy, and the connection between visual arts and music. Since my research will be presented in the form of a performance that combines visual arts and music, the focus of my research involves interdisciplinary knowledge. In this way, I intend to conduct a literature review based on 3 pillars: the context of the two composers' work, the musical and aesthetic ideas of the composers, and the connection of musical and visual images in the music multimedia performance.

#### **3.1 Context of the Life and Works of the Composers**

##### **3.1.1 The context of Liao's 24 Piano Preludes**

The twentieth-century composer, Shengjing Liao, is recognized as a well-known figure of contemporary music in China. His musical style is especially distinguished by the progressive integration of Western classical music. It imbues a synergy between the traditional and the folkloric Chinese culture with a Western technical-aesthetic conception, which created new ways of thinking and creating modern instrumental harmonies. Liao was one of the first generations of academically trained composers in the new era of the People's Republic of China. He attended the Central Conservatory of Music (中央音乐学院), in 1950, which was formed by the unification of three important music faculties: the Nanjing National Conservatory of Music (南京国立音乐学院), the Department of Music of Yanjing University, and the Beiping Art College (北平大学艺术系). The Central Conservatory of Music was, and still is, considered as the most prestigious music conservatories in China, with an excellent teaching staff lead by the violinist and composer Sicong Ma<sup>1</sup> (马思聪), who had received his training at Paris Conservatoire. In 1955, after received a combined Western and Chinese musical education, Liao graduated from the Composition Department of the Central Conservatory of Music and became a postgraduate student in the specialist composition class, studying orchestration with the Ex-Soviet composer Boris Alexandrovich

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<sup>1</sup> Although deeply influenced by European musical culture, Sicong Ma still worked hard to explore a new Chinese music style, focusing mainly on the characteristic Chinese culture (Xiang, 1994).

Arapov. From 1955 to 1956, Arapov was invited to China to teach at the Central Conservatory of Music, offering a range of courses such as composition, orchestration, and analysis. Arapov attached great importance to the large-scale works, presented mostly with the orchestral programmatic music, lively and picturesque, with colorful instrumentation (Zhang, 2011, P.28). Furthermore, Arapov's teaching work always emphasized the concept of combining composition theory and practice. As a result, in early February of 1956, the Central Conservatory of Music held its first composition contest in response to Arapov's teachings, sending the entire university into an immediate creative frenzy. The competition was based on "whether the content of the piece reflected the reality of life, whether it had a national style or whether the piece itself was coherent". This competition not only led to a creative wave in the composition department, but also had a significant impact on the whole country (Zhang, 2011, p.31).

From 1954 to 1958, the emphasis on the exploration and development of traditional and folk harmonic elements in Chinese music academia influenced the elements of Liao's compositions. Whilst conducting field research of different ethnicities in the minority areas of China, Liao acquired an abundance of diverse traditional and folk music influences in his exploration of his own unique compositional arrangement. Many of these works stand out in his early compositions, such as Night of the Torch Festival (火把节之夜), Border Morning (边疆早晨), and so on. They reveal his fascination in programmatic music and ethnic minority cultural scenery. For example, the Torch Festival, written for piano in 1953, was based on the ethnic customs of the minority group Yi (彝). Inspired by the unique ethnic customs and its music, as well as the beautiful local festival of Yunnan, the composition is reflected the beautiful night atmosphere of the Torch Festival with a strong folk charm (Liu&Hu, 2020).

In 1958, after concluding his studies at the Central Conservatory of Music, Liao, together with a large group of outstanding teachers from the Central Conservatory, went to Tianjin to teach and establish the Tianjin Conservatory of Music. In the same year, a collaborative work was produced by a group of teachers (including Liao) and students of the conservatory, in response to the preparation of political themes through national folklore music. This composition was named "Song of the Haihe"(海河之歌) , and it portrayed the process of the people's response to the Party's call for the eradication of the Haihe River until the final victory was achieved. With use of the tones of Hebei folk music (the Tianjin tune), this music

gets a distinctly “national” character; at the same time, the use of the western musical structure is presented based on the oratory form (Wang, 1961, p.19).

This type of politically influenced collective production was a usual occurrence for the time. The level at which political propagation impacted the artistic and cultural fields intensified during the course of the 1960s. In 1962, Liao, along with all the members of the Tianjin Conservatory of Music, went to the countryside to teach in response the Communist Party Directives of "revolutionization, popularization and nationalization" (Zhao, 1988, p.6). In 1966, with the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution across China, teachers with an educational background like Liao's<sup>2</sup> were labelled as right-opportunist and were sent to the rural areas of Tianjin for re-education. From 1968 to 1969, Liao was involved in the collective works such as the opera *ShouZhuYuan* (收租院) and the traditional theatre *PoWuYangFan* (破雾扬帆) (Wan, 2014, p.6). They were based on the themes of the lower classes struggles that the Cultural Revolution so sought to provoke. Liao's artistic production at this time can be deemed to have been almost nil and the only advantage left to him was his continued contact with the existence of the rural countryside with its customs and experiences.

Around 1973, Liao was rehabilitated and returned to the Tianjin Conservatory of Music to continue teaching. From 1978 to 1985, Liao's musical creation reached a new circumstance, which consisted mainly of thematic piano pieces, instrumental music and thematic choral pieces<sup>3</sup> (Zhao, 1988, p.8). In these thematic works, a more diversified and free musical content was observed moving away from the ideas of political preparations.

From 1986 he began to focus his attention on musicological works, while he was teaching at the Xinghai Conservatory of Music (星海音乐学院). He wrote numerous articles exploring Chinese traditional and folk music knowledge. In one of these articles, *Exploration of the Traditional Folk Melodic Progressions in the Yangtze River Regions* (黄河流域民间旋律进行法则初探), published in 1988, Liao summarized the features of the melodic designs and progressions in this specific area of China, and proposed the significance of these musical qualities: “Traditional and folk music are an important subject matter of our national culture.

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<sup>2</sup> Liao's father was Portuguese American and a medical doctor who stayed in the United States. In his youth, Liao studied trumpet in the Nationalist military band (Chen, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> These are the children's piano suite *The Stars Invite Me to Space* (星星邀我游太空), composed in 1978; the two choral pieces *Youth Belongs to Whom* (青春属于谁), *Morning on the Frontier* (边疆早晨), composed in 1979; the choral piece *Autumn Moon at Pinghu* (平湖秋月), composed in 1980; the Chinese Peasants' March (中国农民进行曲), *The Theme of the Puppets* (木偶的主题), composed in 1982; and *Little Planet* (小小行星), composed in 1985.

It is a very important issue for Chinese composers to clarify the features of the melodic progression in China and to distinguish them from the Western way of creating melodies. To achieve this, the first place to start is the study of the folk music from the Yangtze River region.” (Liao, 1988, p.44). As a result of the years of research into the music found in the Yangtze River region, Liao began to experiment with different tones and colors in his compositions, with an emphasis on the classification of the 23 tonalities and their melodic/harmonic characteristics. Incorporated into this context, the 24 preludes emerged as a later and more matured work of the composer. The collection of preludes can be considered as a crystallization of Liao’s long-term compositional research, firstly as a creation of a tonal system based on the Chinese Pentatonic modes and their melodic features; and secondly as the creation of musical imagery imbued with the customs and experiences of country life during the period of the twenty-four Chinese solar calendars. Although this work was officially published in 1999, it was available as early as 1992, according to the article of the author Xiu Hailin (修海林). The premiere date and place of the Preludes was actually on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 1992 during a concert at the Xinghai Conservatory of Music. Xiu stated:

*Although the musical style, technique and texture are still traditional, there are new ideas of using tonal modulations, and some creative musical narratives to reveal certain features of the life experience. The unique musical style is also related to the composer's many years of research into traditional folk modes and their compatibility and variations (Xiu, 1992, p.57).*

Moreover, Liao had also mentioned that he did a practical experience in the 24 Preludes to achieve the new modalities system with the Chinese traditional/ folkloric melodic features. This work represented 20 years of the research and experience of the composer (Liao, 2002).

### **3.1.2 The context of Debussy’s 24 Piano Preludes**

Claude Debussy lived in Europe, from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century, at a time when art and music were going through tremendous transformations. Composers were inspired to create new forms of compositions and styles. They pursued significant changes in their compositional skills, textures, and aesthetic concepts, to portray renewed and increasingly complex musical conceptions. The European cultural and cosmopolitan centre of Paris was an intersecting point of different arts and cultures that emerged because of the three Exposition Universelle, world fairs held in the capital in 1878, 1889, and 1900. It was

during this period of sharing of ideas that Debussy received his piano training and compositional education while attending the Paris Conservatoire. Although he received canonical musical training over a period of 11 years (1872 - 1883), he demonstrated a rebellious side that led him to delve into new varieties of music. During his student years, Debussy explored contemporary literature produced by the likes of Paul Verlaine, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Théodore de Banville to name a few. His notion of “self-pleasure” whilst composing as well as his outrageous harmonies, resulted in protests and agitation amongst conventional teachers. However, with the desire to win the *Prix de Rome*, he had to conform to the academic conceptions (Trezise & Cross, 2003, p.28). In 1884, Debussy won the *Prix de Rome* competition with his cantata *L'enfant prodigue*, but he later commented: “a hybrid form partaking clumsily of all that is trite in opera and choral symphony. It is indeed an invention of Institute: “one of whose authorship no one need boast” (Brook, 1946, p.138).

The *Prix de Rome* allowed Debussy to have 2 years of residence at Villa Medici in Rome, where he took full advantage of the freedom to create his own compositions, since in Villa Medici they were free to compose with almost no supervision (Quah, 2015, p.14). The desire to reveal own musical idea through a new form and colour took Debussy to inspire in Baudelaire's poetic ideas and paraphrased the symbolist conception in music and mentioned: " I want music that is supple and concentrated enough to adapt itself to the lyrical movements of the soul and the whims of reverie." (Debussy in Trezise & Cross, 2003, p.29). While immersing himself in symbolist literature, Debussy also produced several works that met academic demands. The first envoi in Rome was *Zuleima*, but the conventional writing style made him feel "old and stuffy" (Quah, 2015, p.1). However, to the following works, such as *Diane au bois* and *Printemps*, a new form has been experimented by using voice as musical colour (Trezise & Cross, 2003, p.29).

The musical imagery of *Printemps* was influenced by the painting *Primavera* (1482) by the Renaissance painter Sandro Botticelli. In this Choir and Orchestral composition, a small number of whole-tone scales appear, as shown in the score below:



### Example 1: Printemps, bar 153-156

Once Debussy submitted the work to the Academy it was officially considered to break the rules of traditional composition, and his style was “towards an exploration of the strange”. One has the feeling of musical colour exaggerated to the point where it causes the composer to forget the importance of precise construction and form” (Treize & Cross, 2003, p.175).

In the years following his return to France (from 1887), Debussy integrated himself into Parisian intellectual life. He found immense influence in gatherings of like-minded artists who desired to bring the various art forms together. And he spent much of his time at cafés, bistros and Bailly’s bookshop, where the symbolist painters and writers often gathered (Quah, 2015). He likewise attended social gatherings in the salons and homes of intellectuals, the highlight of which was the Tuesday evening meetings of a prestigious group at Mallarmé’s residence, from 1892. As a result of his encounters with fellow lovers of literature, painting, and music, and further inspired by Mallarmé’s homonymous poem, Debussy composed *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune*, between 1892 and 1894. He was drawn to Mallarmé’s motif, in which music, love, nature, and the dream world interact. He found a coherent structure between the poetic suggestion and the musical texture, by the flute melody and the ostinato elements, by the short phrases and the flexible rhythmic patterns, and through an ever-changing sonorous and harmonic background (Treize & Cross, 2003, pp. 73-74). Mallarmé heard the work before its performance and told Debussy that “the music prolongs the emotion of my poem and fixes the scene far more vividly than colour could have done.” (Mallarmé in Brook, 1946, p.150). And the piece was later considered one of Debussy’s most successful works, with Boulez commenting that “La musique modern commence avec l’après-midi d’un Faune” (Boulez, 1968, p.629).

In Boulez’s view, the *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune* signalled the beginning of modern music, he stated: “What was overthrown was not so much the art of development as the very concept of form itself. Here freed from the impersonal constraints of the schema, giving wings to a supple, mobile expressiveness, demanding a technique of perfect instantaneous adequacy. Its use of timbres seemed essentially new, of exceptional delicacy and assurance in touch ...” (Boulez, 1968, pp.344-5).

Between 1887 and 1893, Debussy gained a keen interest in the musical dramas of Wagner and attended two Bayreuth festivals, in 1888 and 1889, where Wagner’s operas were performed. The first time he heard *Parsifal* and *Tristan und Isolde*, he became fascinated with the subjectivity of Wagner and the way the music incorporated the extensive use of

dissonant harmonies, chromatic harmonies to accentuate tension, and the leaving of dissonant chords unresolved. But on a second visit in 1889, Debussy listened to the same pieces, while he found that he disliked Wagner's aestheticism and indulgence in heavy dramatic effects (Brook, 1946, p.145). In the same year, the Paris World's Exhibition brought a new influence on Debussy's music. The exhibition featured Chinese, Spanish, Hungarian, Algerian, and Javanese bands. The Javanese band, in particular, with the gamelan music and the accompanied *Bedayas* dance, enticed him. This combination of the audio-visual was of great interest to Debussy. As a result, this experience became a crucial steppingstone in Debussy's artistic journey. His piano works later showed significant maturity as he boldly explored the natural resonance of the piano, and the effects of layered polyphony (Quah, 2015).

In the following years, Debussy reached a creative peak, and a large part of his work was associated with the visual arts. At the same time, Debussy thought he drew a parallel between the freedom of nature and an idealised free music, based on an imaginative transformation of nature (Trezise & Cross, 2003, p.233). *La Mer* was among his works composed in 1905 and is an example of how he associated aural images with the visual art form. As the musical work progresses, it gives the audience the sensation of moving from one image to another. These sensations are as much of an integral component of the piece, as is the imagery narrative. In *La Mer, trois esquisses symphoniques pour orchestre*, which is in a more classical form than most of Debussy's orchestral compositions, consists of three symphonic sketches: *De l'aube a midi sur la mer*, *Jeux de vagues*, and *Dialogue du vent et de la mer*. Despite its more classical nature, it has a great charm and grandeur. There are a number of quite meticulously detailed pictures, such as the thundering of waves crashing against a rocky shore, fog floating above the seafoam, swirling eddies, and the like. The inspiration gained from the movements of the waves between shadow and light, coupled with the cacophony of the sea, creates an array of tonal colours that come together to create a fantastical polyphonic work.

In addition to the multi-layer polyphonic texture, a cloud-like structure of sound mass appears in Debussy's musical language. Debussy's imaginative reproduction of clouds or water concentrates on their colour, shape, and movement (ibid., p.248). For example, in *Poissons d'or* in *Images II*, the two parts of the bass clef are interwoven to produce a cloud-like hazy background sound that is a very appropriate technique, which shapes the illusion of water in the theme of the composition. Above this sound mass, one can hear a smaller melody representing the fish, seen in the score below:



Example 2: Poissons d'or, bar 3-4

The 24 Piano Preludes were released in the form of two books (the first book was created between 1909 and 1910, and the second between 1912 and 1913), almost all the characteristics of Debussy's style of composition can be found, not only in terms of the stylistic writing, the technical skills, and the combination of images but also in terms of aesthetic ideas. As a result, each of the preludes is short and delicate, making the set more akin to a series of paintings in terms of aural imagery. Debussy's attitude prior to the composition can be seen in his letters to his students: "Collect impressions. Do not be in a hurry to write them down. Because that is something music can do better than painting: it can centralise variations of colour and light within a single picture – a truth generally ignored, obvious as it is" (Debussy in Trezise & Cross, 2003, p.189).

As Debussy thought himself as a conduit for the sounds of nature, the collection of impressions only helped him to better portray musically a "correspondence between Nature and the Imagination" rather than use nature as a tool for the expression of human emotion (Trezise & Cross, 2003, p.253). These natural and scenic metaphors are represented well in the 24 Piano Preludes.

### 3.2 Musical and Aesthetic Thoughts of the Composers

#### 3.2.1 Musical and Aesthetic Thoughts of Liao's Preludes

With consideration to the experimental work of Liao's tonality system research, the 24 Piano preludes were composed based on *the tonal conception of the Lateral Synthesis of the Same Keynote of the Chinese Pentatonic Modes* (中国五声调式同主音横向综合). In Liao's definition, as each Chinese pentatonic scale contains 2 leaning notes attached to the main notes, it is possible to consider 7 notes in one scale, although the function and importance of these notes are different. A new scale could be obtained, when it is based on



the 7-note scale (with main and inclined notes) and is combined by two scales on the same root note. For example, if one put the D Zi (徵) scale and D Yu (羽) scale together, getting the I up to IV of D Zi and the V up to the higher octaves of D Yu, the combined scale could be obtained, with the interval organization being different from the original scales. One of the important things is that the leaning notes of the original scales still take their functions, and they need resolution in the melodic progression (Liao, 2002, p.47).

<b>Mode</b>	<b>Gong</b>	<b>Zhi</b>	<b>Shang</b>	<b>Yu</b>	<b>Jiao</b>
<b>Gong</b>	<b>X</b>	1.ZhiGong	2.ShangGong	3.YuGong	4.JiaoGong
<b>Zhi</b>	5.GongZhi	<b>X</b>	6.Shangzhi	7.YuZhi	8.JiaoZhi
<b>Shang</b>	9.GongShang	10.ZhiShang	<b>X</b>	11.YuShang	12.JiaoShang
<b>Yu</b>	13.GongYu	14.ZhiYu	15.ShangYu	<b>X</b>	16.JiaoYu
<b>Jiao</b>	17.GongJiao	18.ZhiJiao	19.ShangJiao	20.YuJiao	<b>X</b>

GRAPH 1: COMBINATION OF PENTATONIC SCALES

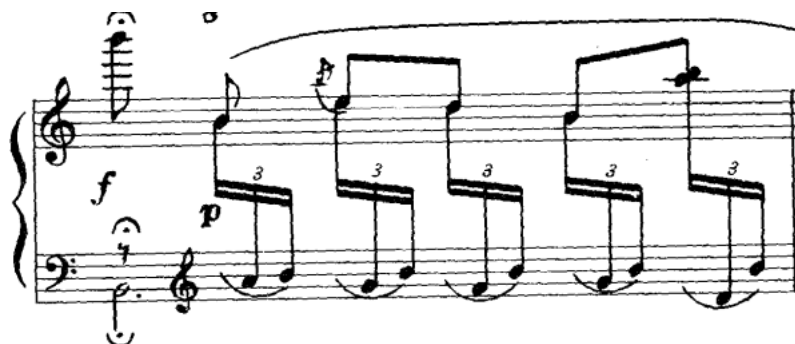
Liao believes that the melodic character is often shaped by the skillful use and handling of the leaning notes, which are invoked to enrich the musical texture harmonically and melodically (Ibid., p.43). The resolution of the leaning note is to the lower major second rather than the upper minor second. Liao believed that a resolution to the upper minor second would give the impression that the resolution was not complete, and so the resolution continued down to the major second. Downward resolution to a major second can be divided into direct and indirect resolution. A direct resolution, such as a melody with B, resolves down to the A of the major second; an indirect resolution does not immediately resolve down to the major second, it resolves by skipping to notes in the upper line, such as B-D-E-A, still with B resolving to A.

The leaning notes are also used as ornaments together with melodic notes, such as appoggiaturas or trills. In this case, the interval used is minor second below the main note. In the melodic textures of certain preludes, the use of leaning notes as melody notes and as a grace note can be proved. For example, In Liao's Prelude, No. 13, *The Beginning of Autumn- Reverie of The Chinese Qixi Festival* (立秋-七夕遐思), the melodic theme is in the F-sharp Jiao mode. Sharp C are the leaning notes of this mode. In the second bar, sharp C appears three times, the first two in the soprano voice, acting as a filler to the melodic line. The last occurrence in this measure is as a melodic tone, shown in the score below.



Example 3: The Beginning of Autumn – Reverie of The Chinese Qixi Festival, bar 1-3

The triad was used, in the harmonic and melodic organizations, as a basic element in traditional Chinese music. Which is different to the chords from the Western major and minor diatonic scales, this kind of triad was created by the first 2 fifth cycles, such as C-D-G. It can often be added to the 3rd fifth, and with omission to the 2nd fifth, another triad may appear, such as C-D-F. Therefore, the chords with a major or minor third and a perfect fifth are rare in Chinese traditional music, and sometimes, they may be found in the Chinese folk music of minority ethnic groups. In this case, the third of the chord is moved up or down a semitone quickly, and Liao defined this type of note the drift note (Ibid., p.46). In his 24 Preludes, examples of the use of these triads and drift notes can be found. For example, in Liao's Prelude, No. 2, *Rainwater- The sound of rain dripping down in spring* (雨水-春雨淅沥). The melodic line of the treble clef can be clearly heard in the melodic line pattern. It is a cycle of fifths consisting of two tones, which are re-la, la-mi, mi-si. Such a composition creates a subtle sense of the Chinese folk melody style.



Example 4: Rainwater- The sound of rain dripping down in spring, bar 8

In Liao's Prelude, No. 13, *The Summer Solstice - Season of summer cropping* (夏至-锄禾当午), the drifting tone can be found within the melody. It is in C Shang mode in this

phrase, where the oscillation between B and C gives the phrase a more Chinese folk music character.



Example 5: The Summer Solstice- Season of summer cropping, bar 30

With this method, Liao obtained 23 new modes and used them to create a practical piece. Only one of these was in *Grain in Beard - Nostalgia at Dragon Boat Festival* (芒种-端阳怀古), which was a ChuGong (楚宫) tune popular in the Xiang-E (湘鄂) region and is not included in this thesis. However, the composer argues that the combined effect of composing a work in such key results in people listening to it, one moment in this key, the next in that key, and when you hear the music come to an end, you often do not know what key it is, although you feel that it undoubtedly stops on the main note and is very stable (Liao, 2002, p.51).

For example, No.8, *Lesser Fullness of Grain - Sudden violent storm* (小满-疾风骤雨), was in F ShangGong (商宫调式), which was a combination of F Shang and F Gong, the scale arrangement of F Shang being F-G-(A $\flat$ )-B $\flat$ -C-(D)-E $\flat$ , and the scale arrangement of F Gong being F-G-A-(B $\flat$ )-C-D-(E).

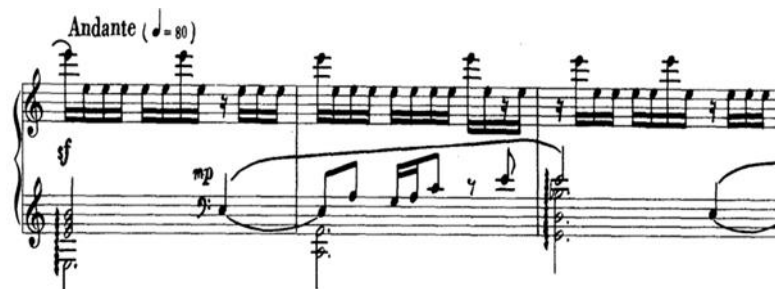
Now the I to IV scale is selected of the F Gong, the V to I scale of the F Shang, and resolve the learning notes to obtain the F ShangGong, F-G-(A $\flat$ )-B $\flat$ -C-D-(E), As shown in the score below.



GRAPH 2: ANALYSIS OF F SHANGGONG

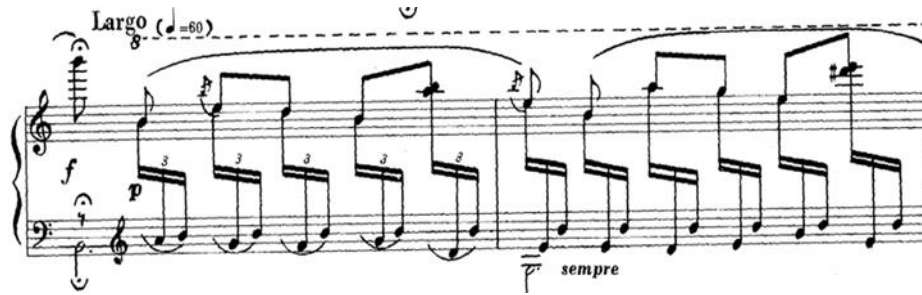
In addition to the points mentioned above, Liao argues that there are many elements beyond modality that influence style: from rhythmic combinations and melodic progressions, from the sequence of tones to the subtleties of intensity and weakness, all play a role in the formation of a specific style (Liao, 2002, p.46).

Such as in *Rainwater- The sound of rain dripping down in spring* (雨水), the rhythmic pattern of the righthand portion is a continuously running 16th note, and the portion of the left-hand consists of a simple rhythmic pattern of eighth notes together with arpeggios forming a three-layer musical texture. The right hand plays a continuous run of the same note, which imitates the dynamics of the rain dripping down; if only the left-hand playing was performed, the allusion of the rain would not be so highlighted in the piece.



Example 6: Rainwater- The sound of rain dripping down in spring, bar 24-26

Additionally, Liao uses continuous triplets to create the sound of dripping rain in this piece, while adding hold tones to create an empty and cold background environment in which the melodic line is the first note of the triplet joined together. The prominence of the sustained and melodic lines creates an acoustic contrast with the rest of the composition.



Example 7: Rainwater- The sound of rain dripping down in spring, bar 8-9

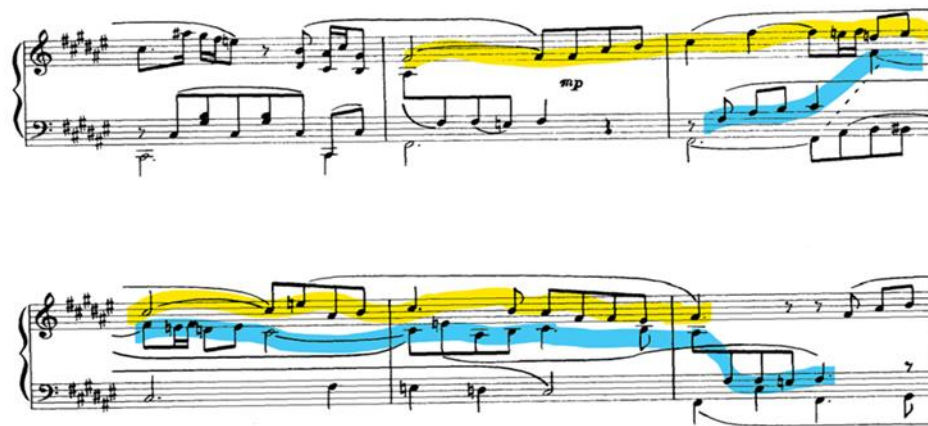
In addition to various elements within and outside the key, the composer's own style of composition is also closely linked to the textures, writing techniques, and inspirations used in the work.

In the section of *The Beginning of Autumn - Reverie of The Chinese Qixi Festival* (立秋-七夕遐思), the horizontal musical texture of the aural image can be divided into three lines A, B, C. Line A can be regarded as the thematic melodic part and lines B and C belong to different accompaniment parts. Lines A and C are simultaneous, C to A is a down fill in the harmony, and line B is a comment to the melodic theme of line A. This way of composing makes the music in its entirety seem more dimensional and richer in sonority.



Example 8: The Beginning of Autumn- Reverie of The Chinese Qixi Festival, bar 9-11

There is an example of canon in the piece seen in the score below. The high and middle voices are written in octave Canon counterpoint.



Example 9: The Beginning of Autumn – Reverie of The Chinese Qixi Festival, bar 24-29

Concerning the sound images, the titles of Liao's 24 Preludes are descriptively based on the 24 costumes of the Chinese Solar Calendar. The preludes could be divided into 4 sections, according to their imaginary contents, such as Fairy Tales, Festive Folklore, Farming Scenery, and Natural Scenery.

Farming	2. Rainwater- The sound of rain dripping down in spring. 6. Grain Rain- Cuckoo's reminder 7. The Beginning of Summer- Time of wheat maturity 8. Lesser Fullness of Grain- Sudden violent storm 10. The Summer Solstice- Season of summer cropping 15. White Dew- Arrival of the grains 23. Lesser Cold- Sledding on the river
Natural scenery	11. Lesser Heat- Lotus Pond in the Rain 16. the Autumn Equinox- Swan heading south. 17. Cold Dew- Daisies fluttering in the wind. 18. Frost's Descent- Cold and Bleak Late Autumn. 20. Minor Snow- Crystalline tree and white blossom

Fairy tale	3. The Waking of Insects-Dance of insects 13. The Beginning of Autumn – Reverie of The Chinese Qixi Festival 24. Greater Cold- Praying to the God of Zao for blessings
Folklore	1. The Beginning of Spring-Spring Festival 4. The Spring Equinox- Countryside trekking 5. Pure Brightness- Remembering a loved one who has passed away. 9. Grain in Beard- Nostalgia at Dragon Boat Festival 12. Greater Heat- Children playing in the water. 14. The End of Heat- Scarecrow in the Field 19. The Beginning of Winter- Country Fairs 21. Greater Snow- Snowman in front of the house

GRAPH 3: CATEGORIZATION OF LIAO'S PRELUDE

Furthermore, Liao adds in a narrative at the end of each piece to provide a more tangible picture of what the aural imagination is about and add to the sensations and emotions. For example, at *The Beginning of Spring-Spring Festival*, the narrative mentioned: “Chinese New Year is approaching, the drums and gongs are in full swing, and the people are dancing. The naughty lad follows the gait of the old woman and makes comical faces in the crowd.” This content sets the scene, atmosphere, and specific tempo of the performance, and conveys what the theme of the piece is based on.

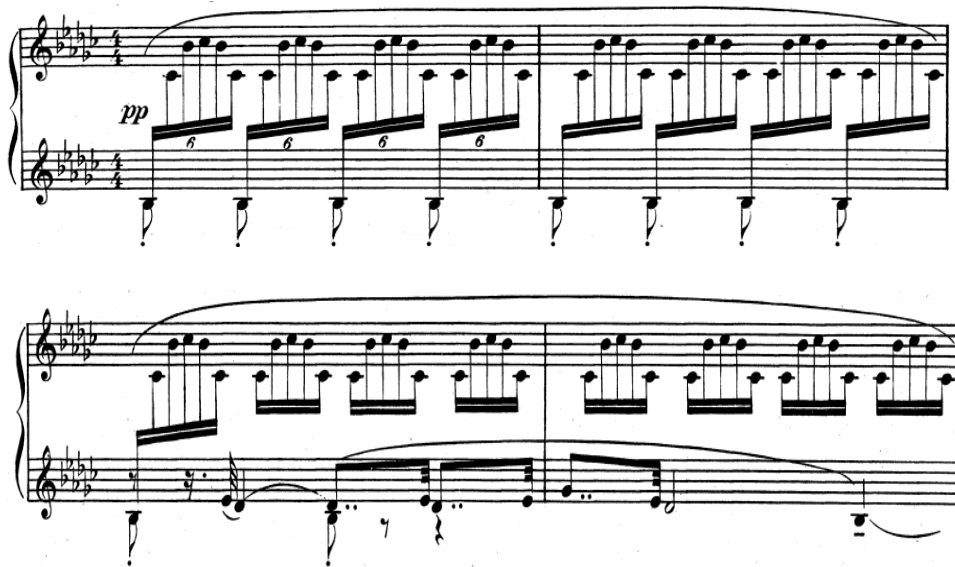
### 3.2.2 Musical and aesthetic thoughts of Claude Debussy’s Preludes

Everyone who knows Debussy’s music recognises a distinctive ‘Debussy sound’ that is not a single quality but many (Trezise &Cross, 2003, p.291). Debussy once said: “it is out of love for it that I try to release it from those sterile traditions which stifle it. It is a free, vibrant art, an open-air art, an art which measures up to the elements, to the wind, the sky, the sea! We must not turn it into a closed and academic art” (Debussy in Trezise &Cross, 2003, p.151).

Therefore, Debussy’s 24 Piano Preludes are the most mature of his masterpieces. Vast differences can be found between his work and traditional works in his two books of preludes. This is evident in the tonality, structure, tone-colour, texture, and thematic meaning.

In respect of his tonality, once Debussy resided in Rome and immersed himself into symbolic poetry, the limitations of the functional harmonic procedure were quickly abandoned in his writings, while still maintaining a suggestive trace. From then on Debussy's tonal conception became more and more liberated, using specific scales and modes, such as the exotic pentatonic and whole-tone scales, the ancient Greek modes, the octatonic scales, and chromatic scales. In the Piano Preludes, an immense sound renewal was emerging through the harmonic combinations based on the juxtaposition of different scales, endeavoring to awaken the aural imagination.

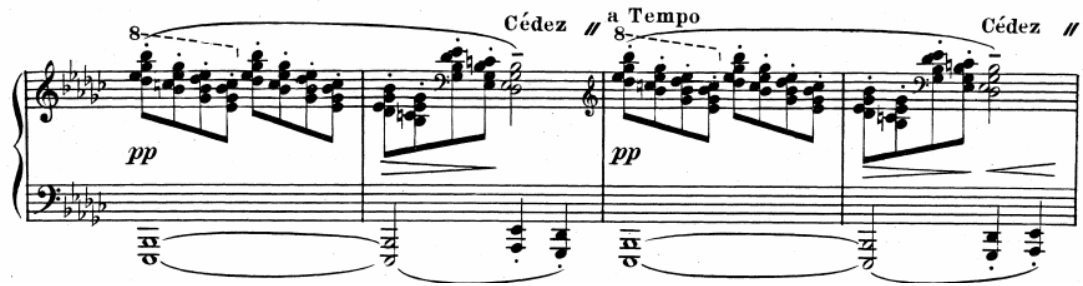
For example, in the Prelude *Le vent dans la plaine* of the first book, the polarity of the tonality Eb minor is established by the dominant note Bb, in the treble bass line. Simultaneously, the pentatonic set is placed in the melodic line and inserted in a sound mass with the chromatic feature, but in an extended position of the interval 9th.



Example 10: *Le vent dans la plaine*, bar 1-4

In bars 9-12, the paralleled 7<sup>th</sup> chords are used above the tonic-dominant 5<sup>th</sup>, however, the 7<sup>th</sup> chords are not resolved in a cadential way, leaving an empty void.





Example 11: Le vent dans la plaine, bar 9-12

In bars 15-22, a variation of the theme is increased, based on the alternated key B<sup>bb</sup>, here the whole-tone set is combined with paralleled intervals, in order to achieve the modulation to the chord G<sup>b</sup> Major.



Example 12: Le vent dans la plaine, bar 15-22

The use of different scale systems can also be analysed in the prelude *Des pas sur la neige* of the 1<sup>st</sup> book. The polarity tone of the prelude is in the key of D minor, demonstrated by the ostinato with the pedal in D. There are two phrases at the beginning of the piece, the D Dorian mode is contained within the first bars of 1-4, and A Aeolian mode is found in bars

4-7. This means that both phrases change modes without changing the tonal centre. This is a very natural modal exchange.

Example 13: Des pas sur la neige, bar 1-7

In addition to the use of church modes, the pentatonic scale is applied as well. For example, in bars 14-15, the pentatonic chord appears with C, E, F<sup>#</sup>, A<sup>b</sup>, and B<sup>b</sup>. This harmonic effect expresses an ethereal and empty emotion with the snow scene. The pentatonic passage also appears in bars 29-31, with the triads in the bass line.

Example 14: Des pas sur la neige, bar 12-15

In the 1<sup>st</sup> book of Prelude *La fille aux cheveux de lin*, the use of the pentatonic scale, coupled with the diatonic scale, is even more evident. The polarity is in G-flat major, and the pentachord is created inside of this diatonic scale with E<sup>b</sup>, F, G<sup>b</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>, D<sup>b</sup>. The clear, transparent pentatonic tones are used throughout the piece, evoking visual associations of luminous colours and the image of a young girl with linen hair.

Très calme et doucement expressif (♩ = 66)

*p sans rigueur*

*p*

Example 15: La fille aux cheveux de lin, bar 1-6

A pentatonic scale appears in the Prelude *Minstrels* as well, even though this piece is mainly diatonic, featuring traditional harmonic progressions. The tonic–dominant notes in G and D are firmly established by octaves in the bass line. The pentatonic chord appears briefly in bars 11-12, as well as similarly textured bars, and remains fixed in the key of G major.

8 Cédez - // Mouvt (Un peu plus allant)

*pp*

*p*

*(très détaché)*

Example 16: Minstrels, bar 8-12

The ambiguous tonality is a characteristic technique used by Debussy to express an uncertain sense. This can be heard in 1<sup>st</sup> book of the Prelude *La sérénade interrompue*. The key signature suggests minor B<sup>b</sup>, but right at the beginning of the prelude, the scale figure is based on the F Phrygian mode, which is analogous to the Spanish gypsy scale used on the guitar. This figure is heard at many points throughout the piece, providing Spanish night scenery.

**Modérément animé**

**Rit. - - - - //**

Example 17: La sérénade interrompue, bar 1-12

Apart from the use of modes and scales, the harmonic progressions in the work are also unusual. Debussy uses the melodic harmonic progression to paint the aural images. “It appears as a slower-moving underlay to motivic arabesque-activity on the surface. Synchronization of this harmonic underlay with the motivic symmetry of the ‘two-bar block’ technique results in a metrical (and hypermetrical) regularity...” (Trezise&Cross, 2003, p.263). At the same time, the non-functional harmonies act as a basis for the progression to reach large modulations, giving the music a more colorful quality. For example, the areas of harmonic inactivity often coexist with a highly chromatic musical surface, often of a whole-tone or octatonic orientation (Ibid., p.264). In addition, the dominant or diminished 7th, 9th and 11th chords, the augmented dissonant chords, and the parallel chords are also prominent components reaching the bold harmony.

The horizontal colorful harmonic progression can be found in various preludes, such as in *Brouillards*, of the 2<sup>nd</sup> book. The movements of the inarticulate arpeggios are created based on the unusual set-classes of octatonic scales, which approach a non-functional, but colorful sonority to meet the aural impression of the hazing images. A similar horizontal harmonic progression is also created to describe the imagery of wind, water, and fireworks in the

preludes, such as *Le vent dans la plaine*, *Ce qu'a vu le vent d'Ouest*, *Odine*, *Feux d'artifice*, and so on.

In the 24 Preludes, the chords with superimposed fourths and fifths appear in abundance, as they are an integral part of Debussy's harmonic expression. The chords formed by the intervals of fourths can be perfect or augmented, and the intervals of the fifth can be perfect or diminished. For Example, the prelude *La Cathédrale engloutie* of the 1<sup>st</sup> book contains many harmonic progressions with the fourth and fifth.

In bars 84-85 (except for the chord on the fourth beat of each bar), the main harmonic progression consists of two voiced chords with superimposed perfect fourths. At the same time, the parallel movement of the chords in the octave adds thickness to the hollowness of the pure resonance of the fourth, creating a characteristic effect.



Example 18: *La Cathédrale engloutie*, bar 84-85

In bars 13 to 15, there are two voices. The high voice is composed of superimposed fifths, which is composed of two chords repeated in a cycle of E, B, F and F, C, G. Both chords are composed of two superimposed perfect fifths and are in parallel movement.



Example 19, *La Cathédrale engloutie*, bar 13-15

The dissonant chords with tritones are also found in Debussy's works, such as in the 1<sup>ST</sup> book's *Danseuses de Delphes*. The chords of the left-hand consist of the augmented fourth between G and C<sup>#</sup>.



Example 20: Danseuses de Delphes, bar 27-28

Using the augmented fourth to reach harmonic tension also appears in the 1<sup>ST</sup> book of *Des pas sur la neige*. For example, in bars 8 to 14, where the augmented fourth interval in the left hand is often not resolved. This increase of tension continues until the end of bar 14 and is suspended on a large tritone composed with an augmented fourth and a diminished fifth.



Example 21: Des pas sur la neiges, bar 8-14

The use of the whole-tone to create the harmonic progression appears in the preludes fragmentarily to produce different timbre-colour. However, in *Voiles* of the 1<sup>ST</sup> book, the entire highlighted tone is set in the harmonic progression.

The 24 preludes are Debussy's culmination of work composed in his final years. They bring together his aesthetic concepts and their inherent compositional techniques, expressing the richness of the sonority of the piano over the impressionistic orchestra. This resonance is demonstrated by the complexity and rapid colouristic changes of musical textures. A dance-like homophonic texture is uncovered with an underlying polyphonic feel and multi-layer to emphasize the various lights, colours, and prints found in nature. The melody shortens and blurs, and in turn, colourful gestures and ornaments are drawn into the highlighted level, which evolves into the most daring of textures. The use of rhythmic ostinato, or the polarity of I – V pedal notes in specific layers, provides the musical texture with a framing base. This is often modulated by the sound mass in another layer to highlight the shapes, colours, and movements linked to the clouds, water, wind, and other elements of nature.

In *La Cathédrale engloutie* portion of the 1<sup>st</sup> book, ostinato is presented in the bass line. For example, in bars 28 to 41, the C is used as a sustained pedal point throughout the lower voice.

The image displays a musical score for the piano piece 'La Cathédrale engloutie' by Debussy, specifically bars 28 to 41. The score is written for piano and features a prominent sustained pedal point in the bass line, marked '8<sup>a</sup> bassa'. The music is characterized by a 'Sonore sans dureté' (sonorous without hardness) quality, indicated by the 'ff' (fortissimo) dynamic marking. The score is divided into three systems, each showing the right and left hands. The bass line consistently maintains a low C note, which serves as a harmonic foundation for the complex, layered textures above it. The right hand features intricate chordal structures and melodic fragments that shift in color and texture throughout the passage.

Example 22: *La Cathédrale engloutie*, bar 28-41

The titles of the 24 Preludes offer the listener a suggestive description of the composer's particular compositional inspirations. In general, the titles are associated with natural landscapes, symbolist poetry, Shakespearean literature, folklore scenery, impressionistic paintings, and so forth. Debussy placed the titles only at the end of each prelude to express

fluid, imaginative and decorative writing, leaving the audience with a sense of color, impressions, movements, and fluid forms. According to Terry Lynn Hudson: “Each book includes a vision of Spain, a dance based on American popular styles, a nod to British literature, a sweetly serene and pastoral piece, an evocation of a folk legend and a view of antiquity (Terry, 2004, p.26).

Accordingly, based on these different stylistic contents, Debussy’s preludes can be grouped into a table.

#### Book I

Type	Title
vision of Spain	IX. La sérénade interrompue
American popular styles	XII. Minstrels
Mythology and legend	I. Danseuses de Delphes
Literature and painting	II. Voiles IV. Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir VIII. La fille aux cheveux de lin XI. La danse de Puck
scenery	III. Le vent dans la plaine V. Les collines d'Anacapri VI. Des pas sur la neige VII. Ce qu'a vu le vent d'Ouest
folk legend	X. La Cathédrale engloutie

#### Book II

Type	Title
vision of Spain	III. La puerta del Vino
Literature and painting	I. Brouillards II. Feuilles mortes V. Bruyères VII. La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune VIII. Ondine IX. Hommage à S. Pickwick Esq. P.P.M.P.C.
Mythology and legend	X. Canope
American popular styles	VI. Général Lavine – eccentric
folk legend	IV. Les fées sont d'exquises danseuses
Commemorative Events	XII. Feux d'artifice

GRAPH 4: CATEGORIZATION OF DEBUSSY'S PRELUDE



### 3.3 Connection of Musical and Visual Images in Performance

Image is an integral component of visual art; it has a sense of space and stillness. Music is a component of the aural art; it has a sense of color and time.

When the images appear as a combined form of musical performance, there is a connection of synaesthesia<sup>4</sup> between them, having a similar effect on the narrative, emotion, structure and among other aspects. Sometimes they complement each other's feelings and sensations like an organic mechanism. According to Nicholas Cook: "both music and pictures can be understood in terms of distributional analysis, and the relationship between them can be understood as an interplay of structurally congruent media: this more or less amounts to saying that the pictures can be analysed musically" (Cook, 1998, p. 159). The author also recognized that there is a narrow relationship between sound and image, which affects each with regards to conformance, complementation and contest (Ibid.). In other words, Lipscomb and Tolchinsky come to confirm the idea of Cook, referring that "the connotative qualities of the music complement the denotative qualities of the words and pictures" (Lipscomb & Tolchinsky, 2005, p.391).

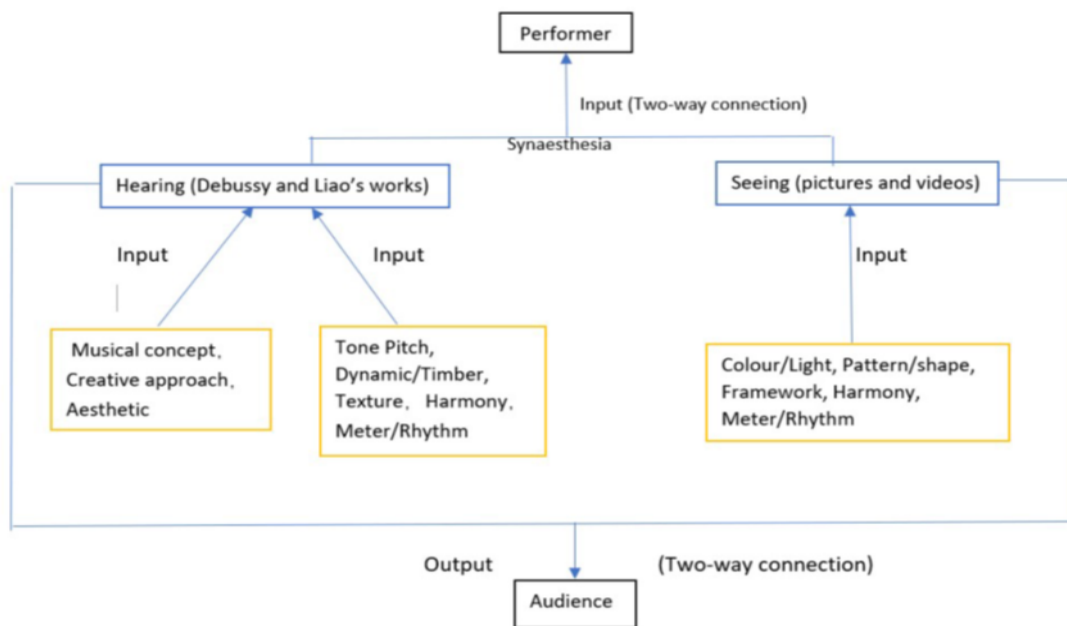
It is verified that Images provide evidence of the idea of artistic interchange, many composers were influenced to some extent by paintings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as Mussorgsky, Debussy, Schoenberg, among others. On the other side, in China, painting and music have always been complementary to each other, and they have incorporated the four main artistic elements of ancient literati. In the Modern era, many composers appeared who produced works associated with images. Thereby, in this research, the focus is on the revelation of the auditory and visual imagery from the perspective of the pianist. The congruence of synaesthesia is from the same subject, while the musical sense is transformed into short videos, through the recreation of the pianist, and while this recreation of visual images is expressed musically by the execution of the

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<sup>4</sup> Julia Simner, Edward M. Hubbard (2013) *The oxford handbook of synaesthesia*, oxford University Press.

*The Oxford Handbook of Synaesthesia* brings together this broad body of knowledge into one definitive state-of-the-art handbook. It includes many concisely written chapters, under broader headings, which tackle questions about the origins of synaesthesia, its neurological basis, its links with language and numbers, attention and perception, and with 'normal' sensory and linguistic processing. It asks questions about synaesthesia's role in language evolution and presents both contemporary and historical overviews of the field. It shows synaesthesia's costs and benefits (e.g., in creativity, memory, imagery) and describes how synaesthesia can provide inspiration for artists and designers. The book ends with a series of perspectives on synaesthesia, including a first-hand account, and philosophical viewpoints which show how synaesthesia poses unique questions about sensation, consciousness and the nature of reality.

piano. In such a way, the multimedia performance could achieve a mutual complementation, namely in emotions, colours, harmonies, rhythms, textures and structures. In the example below, it is possible to verify the bi-connection between performer and listener, through the synesthesia of the auditory and visual senses. The performer prepared an interpretive elasticity on the piano, in order to add timbre colours, emotions, rhythmic and harmonic movements in visual images. At the same time, visual images created by performer also outline the musical figures, adding colours, lights, shapes, surrounds and other elements.



GRAPH 5: BI-CONNECTION BETWEEN PERFORMER AND AUDIENCE

It is a very special musical performance that is presented to the audience in this way. In fact, it is related to the understandings and feelings of audience, the expected effect is that each listener (spectator) can experience the music and video created by the performer during a specific time/space; and each individual can create their own meaning, a meaning that represents their own emotional or internal experience during the multimedia performance.

## 4. Proceeding of the research

In this investigation, 12 preludes were selected for short video compositions. In the expectation of summarizing and highlighting the essential features of the study, I divided the 12 preludes into six groups with similar contexts.

### 4.1.1. La Fille aux Cheveux de Lin

The Prelude *La Fille aux Cheveux de Lin* is inspired by the Poem of the same name by the French poet Charles-Marie René Leconte de Lisle.<sup>5</sup>

The imagery in the poem depicts a girl with flaxen hair, in a flower-filled meadow, sunlight, and larks, images that symbolically reveal the poet's inner emotions. In the Prelude, these images and emotions are aurally represented by melody, harmony, and particular timbres, that create the metaphoric tone of the poem.

The first step in creating the visual imagery was to identify the thematic material that I required for the video and to integrate them with the pentatonic melody of the music theme, in the opening section. In the visual theme, the girl with the flaxen hair was the obvious choice, given the wholeness exposition and recapitulation of the musical theme. The colours of the natural light, the flowering meadow, the Lark, and the clouds also became essential elements for the layout of the visual imagery. For the video production, I also needed to build sensory bridges between the music and the visual elements, such as mediating pictorial colour with musical colour, image structure with musical structure, visual harmony with aural harmony, and video speed with musical rhythm and meter.

In terms of colour, it is musically determined by tonality, which is distributed in the entire composition in: G-flat (bars 1-3), E-flat (bars 4-7), G-flat (bars 8-13), C-flat (bars 14-16), G-flat (bars 17-18), E-flat (bars 19-23), and G-flat (bars 24-39). There is a relatively smooth change of the tone and, simultaneously, the pentatonic scale harmony is blended with the diatonic scale harmony. Therefore, the melodic colour of the entire piece is hazy, warm, and corresponding to the images.

Regarding the music and image structure, the Prelude can be divided into three parts, each of which has the melodic theme symbolising the flaxen-haired young girl. This theme

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<sup>5</sup> Sur la luzerne en fleur assise, Qui chante dès le frais matin ? C'est la fille aux cheveux de lin, La belle aux lèvres de cerise. L'amour, au clair soleil d'été, Avec l'alouette a chanté. Ta bouche a des couleurs divines, Ma chère, et tente le baiser ! Sur l'herbe en fleur veux-tu causer, Fille aux cils longs, aux boucles fines ? L'amour, au clair soleil d'été, Avec l'alouette a chanté. Ne dis pas non, fille cruelle ! Ne dis pas oui ! J'entendrai mieux Le long regard de tes grands yeux Et ta lèvre rose, ô ma belle ! L'amour, au clair soleil d'été, Avec l'alouette a chanté. Adieu les daims, adieu les lièvres Et les rouges perdrix ! Je veux Baiser le lin de tes cheveux, Presser la pourpre de tes lèvres ! L'amour, au clair soleil d'été, Avec l'alouette a chanté (Leconte de Lisle, 1852).

is produced on the pentatonic scale, which provides the music with a pure and peaceful atmosphere. Therefore, when constructing the images, the primary pictures of the three appearances of the theme are basically the same apart from being suitably rendered with different lights and textures. For example, in order to highlight the hazy and quiet emotion of the music, a new image is added to the theme image to blur it. In the editing software, the first step is selecting the main screen, then choosing a soft light within the image blending mode and adjusting the aspect ratio to the images.

As shown in the images, there are three appearances of the theme, consisting of the figure of the girl with flaxen hair.



Pictures 1: The various appearances of the girl with flaxen hair

Concerning the visual harmony and its correspondence to the music harmony, we find that the triads of diatonic scales are often used, with the seventh chords and pentachords, to obtain the colourful harmony texture in the music. Therefore, to show the different senses of harmony, the visual combination is a necessary component to reflect this atmosphere. Two ways were chosen to express the sense of harmony, one was by using images with a strong contrast of light and shadow, and the other was overlapping the images with different levels of sharpness. As shown in the pictures below, the 2<sup>nd</sup> bar 9<sup>th</sup> and the 24<sup>th</sup> bar harmonies of the Prelude are represented respectively.



Pictures 2: Colourful harmonies with light and shadow

The speed of the video playback was an important component. It had to match the metric and rhythmic aspects of the Prelude. There are many expressive terms for recording the movements of the prelude, which, in addition to expressing the basic mood of the music,

can also show suggestions for the tempos of the performance. Three rather obvious changes in tempo are verified in the music. The first tempo change is found at bar 19, where the expressive term states *Un peu anime*. Thus, the jump in colour assists the tempo advance, and at the same time adjusts the speed of the picture transition to the corresponding position. In terms of colour, I chose the visual colour switch from purple to light green to bright green, shown in the pictures.



Pictures 3: Larks with different backgrounds

The second tempo change is found in bars 23-24, marked by the term *Cédéz*, indicating the impeded tempo here and then moving on to the next bar. At the beginning of bar 24, where it is marked by the term *sans lourdeur*, which is interpreted as meaning carefree

without heaviness. In this section, which is all about parallel chord movements, the pianist needs to play a little more gradually combined with the slowing down of the video. Furthermore, this parallel movement uses pentatonic chords, it is therefore important to maintain an ethereal feeling with the timbre colour. The duration of *Murmuré et en retenant peu à peu*, at the beginning of bar 32, is used to show a quiet and slow transition to the end of the piece, so the imagery in the picture depicts a slow and blurred process from complexity to simplicity, reducing the number and speed of the interchanging pictures. Simultaneously, the combination of the content and speed of the pictures is achieved by the effect of murmur and quietness.

#### **4.1.2 The Beginning of Autumn – Reverie of The Chinese Qixi Festival (立秋-七夕遐思)**

In the Chinese solar calendar, Liqiu (立秋), indicates the very beginning of the Autumn season. The title of this piece does not only describe the Autumn scenery but adds the Chinese mythology of The Cowherd and Weaver Girl love story (牛郎织女). Therefore, this Prelude is inspired by a fairy tale essence. At the end of the piece, the composer also wrote a narrative: “On the night of Qixi Festival, one was resting outdoors and looked up to see stars twinkling in the galaxy. Did the Cowherd and the Weaver Girl meet each other on this day? A reverie arose...”. Like Debussy's Prelude *La Fille aux Cheveux de Lin*, in this Prelude, I also chose the visual elements to build the basic forms, such as maple leaves, a starry sky, and larks.

The whole piece is structured in a Ternary Form. According to this structure, I also prepared the video to consist of three parts, which correspond to the musical form.

Part I (bars 1-9) is also the introduction, written with two phrases, each of which consists of a melodic motif, a cadential-like phrase, and a chordal harmony. Therefore, the different musical elements were framed in the images of the video by different figures and in different rhymes. In the score, the thematic motif is in the F sharp Jiao mode and the F sharp Gong mode as shown in the example:

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "The beginning of Autumn – Reverie of The Chinese Qixi Festival". The score is written for piano and is divided into five systems. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the melodic line with some rests and dynamic markings. The third system features a dense texture with multiple voices in both hands. The fourth system shows a more rhythmic and melodic texture. The fifth system concludes with a final chord and melodic phrase. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings like *mp*, *pp*, and *cresc.*.

Example 23: The beginning of Autumn – Reverie of The Chinese Qixi Festival, bar 1-9

The acoustic effect of this combination of two modes creates a bleak, mournful emotional atmosphere. In the imagery, it was necessary to avoid bright colours and to focus on the sudden cold, and clear sense of the atmosphere. Maple leaves were chosen for the visual material.

When the melodic motif is connected to the cadential-like phrase, the flowing movement pushes the musical thought to an improvised rhythm. Therefore, the visual imagery was selected to get material, which creates a sensation of movement, captured by the visual effects of slowly falling maple leaves, landing, and floating on the water.

In order to visually highlight the harmonies in the music, the base materials are overlaid.


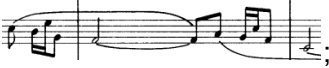



Technically speaking, the contents of the two images were copied separately. The video was then played in reverse, overlapping the original visual image, which added a sense of harmony to it without destroying the theme. As shown in the pictures.



Pictures 4: Falling leaves

Part II (bars 10-58) consists of three sections A, B, and A1. Section A (10-25) is a narrative of the melodic theme, in F sharp Jiao Gong mode. There are three lines in the score, in

which the first line of the soprano showing the rhythmic gestures like ; the second line of the soprano showing the main melodic progression of the theme, like ; the third line in the bass showing the harmonic progression like , and keeping up with the theme.

To correspond to this overlaying structure in the video framework, a background of a starry sky was chosen. The faint and twinkling stars juxtapose the maple leaves. The maple leaves, the Milky Way Galaxy, and the waning moon (which symbolises the sadness and the inability to reunite) highlight these three lines of the score. Multiple thematic elements were superimposed to vitalise the visual content, and editing software was used to process the harmony of the picture and the light, ensuring the projection into the main, and secondary material. The effects are shown in the pictures:



Pictures 5: Falling leaves in the starry sky

Section B (bars 26-37) differed from the previous one, reverting to a three-part Canon polyphonic writing. In the overall sound of this section, there is a higher degree of fluidity and liveliness. On the visual side, the colouration of the picture becomes more complex. Continuing from the previous thematic materials, a new element is added: The Lark. It is added together with a colour adjustment, as shown in the picture.



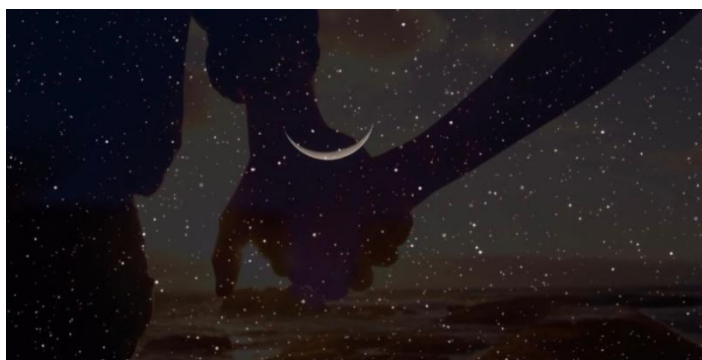
Picture 6: Lark and the stars

Section A1 (bars 38-58) reproduces the return of the texture, material and tonality of section A. The climax of the piece is reached with an extension of the pillar chord, in bar 54. Therefore, the rising moon is used as the base image, while the falling leaves are added in. This image has an echo effect to correspond to the recapitulation of the music, placed in bar 55. As shown in the picture.



Pictures 7: Full moon and falling leaves

Part III (bars 59-75) is considered as a Coda of the whole piece. The material of the introduction part returns to here, to create an echoing effect. Thus, the visual images are mostly the same for the most part. There is a dynamic change in the last 9 bars of the music, a melodic line arising from *pp* to *fff*. In my opinion, the music expresses emotions of nostalgia and strong attraction, therefore, in the video, the image of a shadow of lovers holding hands is placed in the starry sky background. This expresses both a sense of longing and a deep regret from the darkness of the background, thus corresponding to what the composer wrote in the narrative.



Picture 8: The waning moon, starry sky and the lovers

#### 4.2.1 La sérénade interrompue

From the observed aural effects, such as the tonal language, the staccato touch on the Spanish guitar scales, and the melodic and rhythmic contours with a Moorish flavor, a strong Southern Spanish influence can be heard in this piece. One could imagine an evening serenade scene where a guitar is strummed while flamenco dancers tap their feet within an ancient Andalusian structure. Three main elements are therefore chosen to build the video clip: flamenco dance steps, guitar playing gestures, and the images of the Alhambra Palace.

Concerning to the structure, the Prelude is arranged by two melodic themes that interrupt each other, thus forming a coming and going of a discontinued serenade. There is an interlude that brings the aural image to a place far away from the main themes of time and space between the expositions.

#### Part I (Bars 1-49)

Bars 1-18 imitate the timbre effect of guitar; the texture consists of alternating eighth and sixteenth notes carried out by the left and right hands, as seen in the example below.

The F Phrygian scale can be found here, akin to the Spanish guitar scale. In bars 19-24,

the music is created through broken chords and the rhythmic characteristics of the flamenco dance. After the appearance of the 1<sup>st</sup> theme, the music transforms into another scene. Between bars 25-40, the 2<sup>nd</sup> theme rises with a singing character, inserted into the background with a water-like sonority. In bars 40-52, the music suddenly returns to the 1<sup>st</sup> theme.

**Modérément animé**

The musical score is written in bass clef, 3/8 time, and B-flat major. It is marked 'Modérément animé'. The first system (bars 1-4) is labeled 'quasi guitarra' and 'pp (comme en préludant)'. The second system (bars 5-12) shows a transition to a more melodic line with dynamics 'mf' and 'pp'.

Example 24: La sérénade interrompue, bar 1-12

The video can be composed of imagery consisting of a fountain in the Alhambra Palace gardens, flamenco dancers, and guitar playing. The visual materials are overlaid with a first and secondary focus, as seen in the pictures below. The exterior of the Alhambra at night is set as the background base material, while the flowing water in the flowerbeds is the focal point. This overlapping effect visually corresponds to the rhythm of the guitar in bars 1-18. The rhythmic melody of the flamenco in bars 19-24 is visually conveyed in the second picture, which shows a woman dancing the flamenco in the foreground, with rising water as the backdrop. The third picture presents an image of a guitar being played to convey the transition in the music.





Picture 9: Overlay of the Alhambra with various images

Bars 54-72 elaborate on the 2<sup>nd</sup> theme, with a song-like melody, which is sustained by a water-like sound mass. The tonality is maintained at F Phrygian.



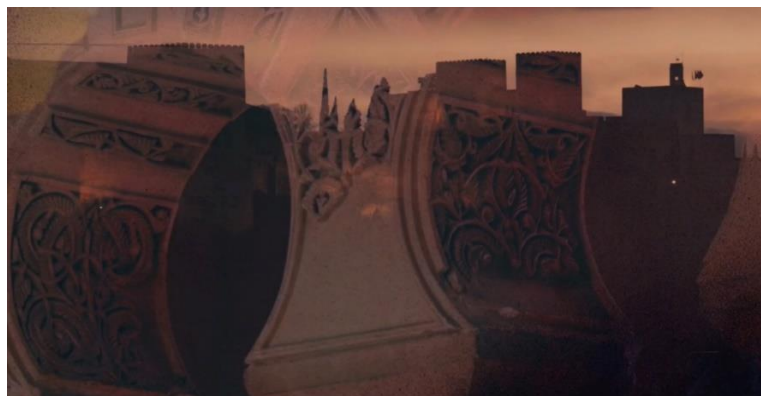
Example 25: La sérénade interrompue, bar 54-59

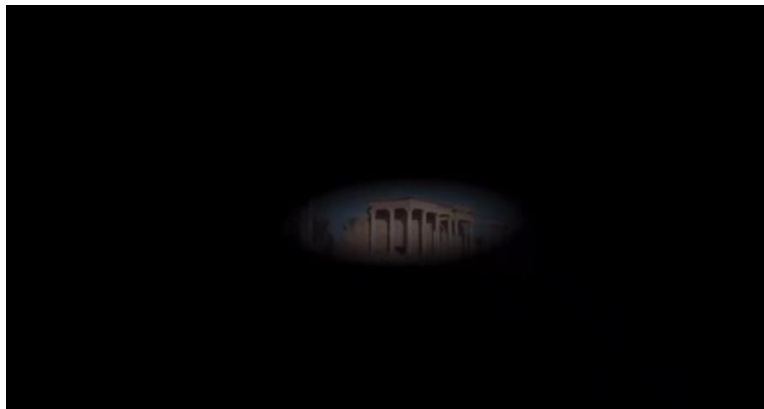
Between bars 80 and 89, the texture and tempo are changed, altering the tonality, fluctuating between D major and F Phrygian. The texture changes from a single alternating eighth and sixteenth note, to a multi-layered progression. A great sense of contrast is created in this progression, where the expression “lointain” is confronted with the accented rhythm of the flamenco guitar.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled 'Modéré' and features a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/8 time signature. It begins with the dynamic marking 'pp lointain'. The bottom staff is labeled 'Rageur' and 'Modéré', with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It starts with a dynamic marking of 'f' and later changes to 'pp subito'. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Example 26: La sérénade interrompue, bar 80-89

Since the music is multi-layered and with contrasts, it is necessary to create an equally multi-layered image for the video. For the bottom background images, the Alhambra exterior at night sets the scene, with a view of the fortress interior added in at different intervals of the music. The third image corresponds to bars 76-79, which act as transitional phrases, therefore only a single image was used. The last picture compliments bars 80-89, where tonal alternations occur as colours contrast dramatically with that of the previous sections. This is achieved by a stenciled view of the Alhambra with only the central bright colours appearing visible. This is in harmony with the expression of distance represented in the music, creating a contrast in the visual colours.





Picture 10: Architectural details in the Alhambra

Bars 90-137 return to the original theme, so the video again displays images from the initial segment, creating a circular form.

#### 4.2.2 Rainwater-The sound of rain dripping down in Spring (春雨-雨水淅沥)

In the Chinese solar calendar, Rainwater represents the period of wet weather at the beginning of Spring. It is said that the rains of spring are as precious as oil. The composer expresses the joy of the farmers at the end of the piece: “As the proverb goes, spring rain is as precious as oil, although the noise of the raindrops is hardly annoying, the peasants



hear in it the message of a good harvest.” Thus, the elements of the visual thematic material for this music can be identified as the Spring rains.

The piece is structured in Ternary Form, which can be divided into three main parts with a corresponding instruction and coda.

The rhythm of the introduction (bars 1-7) ranges from sparse to dense, with a raindrop-like motif in the soprano voice. This motif is created by 2<sup>nd</sup> minor jumped to octave below, always falling in the third beat of each bar. The lower voice keeps a steady harmony, but with a chromatic downward movement in the base notes.



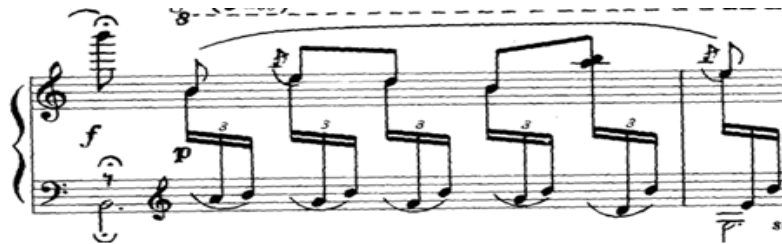
Example 27: Rainwater- The sound of rain dripping down in the Spring, bar 1-7

The harmonic progression and melodic texture in this part are simple, it therefore cannot be too visually complex. The dynamic visual of a drop of water is used to imitate the feeling of falling rain, seen in the picture below. It was a crucial element to ensure that each moment of the water drop was adjusted in the video to correspond to the last beat of each bar in the music. To do this it was necessary to select Speed Changes in Curves in the editing software. Then Custom Speeds was selected to record the moment in the editing software. When the last beat of each bar occurs according to the time played. In this way the music is synchronised with the video.



Picture 11: Falling raindrop

In part A (bars 8-23), the remaining bars consist of a harmonic and melodic texture with similar material. It is all melodic development by continuous triplets and fills each bar with a sustained bass, as shown in the example is the subject material of Part A. The continuous triplet runs can describe the feeling of falling rain. Thus, the picture of rain dripping is mainly shown in the image.



Example 28: Rainwater, the sound of rain dripping down in Spring, bar 8

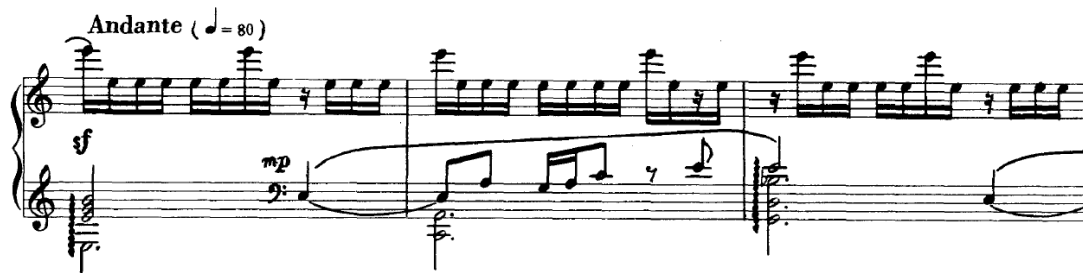
Between the sentence divisions of each of the 4 bars, it is necessary to switch and adjust the image, for example, to fill the look successively with the elements of Spring, such as green leaves and sunshine.





Pictures 12: Falling rain, leaves, and sun

In Part B (bars 23-39), the melodic line is concentrated to the left hand, with the right hand being a continuation of semiquavers, imitating the falling of the raindrops.



Example 29: Rainwater, the sound of rain dripping down in Spring, melodic line and background texture, bar 23-25

The phrase division is based on eight measures, with two phrases in total, so the images are changed twice. In the image frame, the image is zoomed into rain falling onto the shoots of new newly sprouting crop field. The colours are more vivid embracing rain and sun, which portrays the emotion of joy.



Pictures 13: Lively plants in the rain

In Part A1 (bars 39-57) there is a recapitulation of the A. The overall texture and harmony are the same as in part A, but with a 2-bar extension (bars 56 to 57). The harmonic function changes in IV-V-I, thus giving a calm and quiet sound effect. In connection with this effect, the visual image portrays the impression that the weather is gradually clearing up, with the rain starting to fall lighter. Consequently, the picture focuses only on the plants in the sunlight and the lighter rainfall.



Picture 14: Plants in the rain, which is shining in the Sun

In the Coda (bars 57-61), both the melody and the texture are derived from the introduction, therefore, the same material as the introduction for the visuals is chosen, forming an echo from the beginning to the ending.



Example 30: Rainwater, the sound of rain dripping down in Spring, bar 57-58

#### 4.3.1 Des pas sur la neige

The title of the prelude *Des pas sur la neige* gives a very clear visual image such as snow and footprints.

The whole piece is structured in a Binary form, consisting of the introduction and Part A, bridge phrase and Part A1, and the Coda. The form is relatively free between all the parts.

Beginning with the 4-bar, the piece's introduction is in the key of D minor, and the motif that appears in the first bar is a fixed figure throughout the piece, as shown in the below example.



Example 31: Des pas sur la neige, bar 1

The dynamic of the first bar is marked *pp*, they enter very slowly, extending by one beat each time they appear. This motif creates a very clear sensation of the footprints in the snow-filled landscape, which portrays feelings of cold and an emotional loneliness.



Picture 15: Footprints in the snow-filled landscape

In Part A (bars 5-15), the melody of the first phrase is built on *D Dorian mode*, which creates an atmosphere of regret. The melody of the first phrase (bars 5-7) is not developed, and here the lower line of the musical texture begins to be thickened by the chords with extended positions, which fills a harmonic tension to the music, combined with the intermediate line of the footprint motif and with the upper melodic line.

Example 32: Des pas sur la neige, bar 4-7



Picture 16: Snowing landscape without sunlight

The second phrase is written entirely in a highly chromatic form. It contrasts sharply with the first phrase. The texture is increased to four voices, with the melodic voices placed in the bass range below the fixed figure. In addition to the fixed figure voice, the other three voices are in different rhythms.



Example 33: Des pas sur la neige, bar 8

In this part, since the musical lines are overlaid, multi-layered images are required as well. However, as the overall atmosphere of the piece is cold and lonely with a snowy landscape as the main scene, a video overlay would have destroyed the overall visual cleanliness. Therefore, multiple levels of images are found in the same scene. As shown in the picture below, from top to bottom, the sun, the clouds, the wind-blown snow are all visible. These four images are clean and simple in terms of colour, and all make logical sense in the same image at the same time.



Picture 17: Snow in the sunshine

In the Connecting phrase (bars 16-19), the material is derived from the introduction, but with some minor extensions in contrast. The bass counterpoint line is added in bar 16, and the soprano melody is added in bar 17. The soprano melody is expanded between bars 18-19, for a more intense mood. As the material in this phrase is an expansion from the introduction, it is important that the visual material be similar to the introduction.

In Part A1 (bars 20-31), the first phase (bars 20-25) expands on part A, building on the F Phrygian mode. The second phase (in bars 29-31) is introduced by the chromatic passage, with the parallel triad replacing the fixed figure. This part is a variation of the first part, therefore visually similar, with only subtle changes in bars 29-31. The images used are only snow and wind blowing to convey the high and low voices in the music, as well as a foreshadowing before the arrival of the Coda.



Picture 18: Snow in the wind



In the Coda (bars 32-36), the footprint motif is moved to the soprano and by the parallel octaves and finished on the D minor chord. In this section, the visual image of the stopped clock is added in and layered over the snow-covered landscape. This effect comes to reveal the psychological meaning of the music, which expresses a sense of breaking reality, bleakness and cold, while responding more to the title.



Picture 19: The Bell and snow

#### 4.3.2 Minor Snow-Crystalline Tree and White Blossom (小雪-玉树琼花)

In the 24 terms of the Chinese solar calendar, minor snow is the period when the snow has just fallen in the North of China, between the end of November and the beginning of December. The temperature continues to drop down to below zero degrees, and the land is covered by light snow, which adds to the beauty of the season. The composer wrote in the narrative of the prelude: “The first light snowfall, the land covered with whiteness, the branches and blossom in the garden crystalline and white, the rising sun reflected with crystallized silver light is refreshing to people's minds.” (小雪初降，大地一片白茫茫，庭院枝头，玉树琼花，旭日映照闪银光，令人神怡心旷). Therefore, the visual aspect of this piece is centered on a beautiful snow-filled scene, with the silvery reflections of sunlight on the branches of blanketed trees.

Musically speaking, this piece contains only a single concept, which develops into three similar sections with a coda.

Section one (bars 1-13) consists of four small phrases in the mode of E ZhiYu (徵羽) and ends with a half cadence. The texture of the soprano line uses superimposed chords, which are fluctuated with oscillating movements, making a transparent background sound mass. The main melody comes up in the middle line, interspersed with the soprano line,

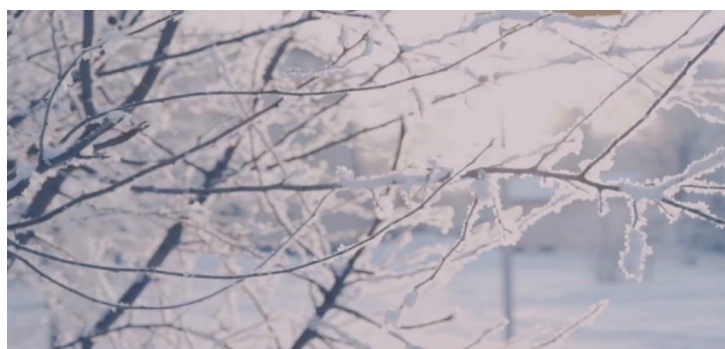
expressing calm and refreshed emotions. In the bass line, the notes appear by the harmonic function, creating light resonances that provide a low relief to the sound frame.



Example 34: Minor Snow- Crystalline tree and white blossom, bar 1-4

Section II (bars 14-24) has the same rhythmic pattern, and most of the texture is similar to Section I. Aurally, it adds a sense of space, as the mode changes to the A Gong (宮) with the B JueShang (角商).

These sections are accompanied by the same visual illustrations, the landscape of snow sparkling in the sunlight, and the branches of snow-covered trees.



Picture 20 : Snowy plants in the sun

Part III (bars 25-31) develops from the last bar of the previous section. The mode stabilizes at the B JueShang (角商). The dynamic is marked as *ff* at the beginning of this section and

descends for the following bars. The positions are reversed between soprano and midline lines, making the melody more prominent. The material in the image is a selection of snow-covered trees, which are contrasted with parts A and B by adjusting the brightness of the light and the sense of space in the image.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a melodic line in the treble clef and a rhythmic accompaniment in the bass clef. The instruction "poco a poco decresc." is written above the first staff. The second system also consists of two staves, with a melodic line in the treble clef and a rhythmic accompaniment in the bass clef. The instruction "mp" is written below the second staff.

Example 35: Minor Snow- Crystalline tree and white blossom, bar 25-32



Picture 21: Ancient Chinese Architecture in the snow

The Coda (bars 32-40) returns to the E ZhiYu (徵羽) mode, where the structure, texture, and harmonies are retuned to Section I. Thus, the visual returns to the initial image.

#### 4.4.1 Minstrels

Debussy chose the title *Minstrels* to suggest an environment in which the troubadours roamed from place to place, playing, singing, and performing burlesques routines. According to author Siglind Bruhn, Debussy was referring to the American black-face comedians whom he saw performing in Paris. Therefore, in the Prelude, this is audible in the instrumental timbres, such as the banjo, strings, bone castanets, and tambourine. At the same time, a free and awkwardness harmonic and rhythmic progression is distinguished in the music, representing the vaudeville ambiance (Bruhn 1997). Based on this context, the

choice of the visual elements in the creation of the video is focused on a jazz ensemble. According to the section development, various gestures of playing instruments appear and are superimposed with the image of the city's streets.

Musically speaking, the entire Prelude can be viewed as a juxtaposition of multiple sections, divided into A, B, C, B1, D, A.

Section A (bars 1-8) is opened immediately with the main key in G major and structured with two repeated phrases. The bass line, with the octaves in staccato, portrays a drumbeat. Along with the group of the acciaccatura, in the soprano, alluding to the banjo. A playful and swinging feel is given to the overall rhythm.

The musical score for Example 36: Minstrels, bar 1-8, is presented in three systems. The first system (bars 1-3) shows a soprano line with acciaccatura and a bass line with staccato octaves. The second system (bars 4-6) includes dynamic markings 'pp' and 'p', and the instruction 'Cédez - # Mouvt'. The third system (bars 7-8) includes the instruction 'Cédez - #'.

Example 36: Minstrels, bar 1-8

Thus visually, swaying lights illuminate a group of jazz instruments, which somehow describe the rhythms of the bass line and the acciaccatura gestures.



Picture 22: Instruments under the lights

In Section B (bars 9-34), the music moves a little more into the expressive term *Un peu plus allant*, and the timbre changes to the percussive toque, marked by the term *très détaché*. The harmonic progression approached in irregular ways, passing through the dominant 7<sup>th</sup>, the dominant F<sup>#</sup> major chord, and the A<sup>b</sup> major chord.

In the aural sense, the image of a tambourine, chosen to depict the percussive toque, is the main element, with the street scene in the background, this image extends to bar 27.



Picture 23: Street Scene with Tambourine

Proceeding to bars 28-31, the key changes to major in the E flat chord, and the texture on the upper line changes to an octave chord sequence. The video phrase creates a street scene in the background, with the rhythmic figure of water pulsing on an audio speaker.



Picture 24: Street scene with water drops on the audio

In Section C (bars 35 - 44), the music is closed to a ridicule expression, portrayed with the expressive term *Moqueur*. The bass voice imitates the pizzicato, and the soprano voice is a progression of augmented triads. A double bass player, the clown, and background street scene depict these elements in the video.



Picture 25: Street scene with double bass and clown

Between bars 45 and 57, the motifs of section B are returned and proceed through to section D from bar 58, with the addition of new materials.

In section D (bars 58-77), the musical progression begins with drums, marked as *quasi tamburo* in the expressive term. After six bars, it changes into a chromatic progression, marked as *expressif*, to open a very cantabile and warm melody in the middle line. Visually, the choice inserting the image of tambourine into the video is due to a term marked on the score. The saxophone, added due to its warm and cantabile timbre nature, brings together the musically presented melody.

#### 4.4.2 The end of Heat-Scarecrow in the Field (处暑-田间草人)

In the Chinese folklore, there are many proverbs about “The end of Heat”, such as,

"Sorghum everywhere in the end of Heat " (处暑高粱遍地红); " If peasants take a break in the end of Heat, it becomes difficult at harvest" (处暑若歇田，割地叫艰难). All these proverbs show that summer is closely linked to farming. The composer wrote a narrative at the end of the piece: "On the 15th of July of the Chinese lunar calendar, it is the time of summer, and the grain is ripe in the north. The Ancestors said it was time to place the scarecrow in the field. The scarecrow appeared to tell the birds: don't eat the grain, or I will have worked all year for nothing. The birds chirped, the scarecrow danced in the wind, and the struggle between the two sides was very amusing; the birds fled in panic and the scarecrow was full of humor." In the planning of the video clip, the main elements in the visual were defined based on the textual and musical narratives: a field, scarecrow, and birds.

The structure of this piece can be divided into three parts and *Coda*.

Part I (1-10) is an introduction to the piece, with B $\flat$  GongJiao Mode as the tonal center. It is divided into two phrases, where the texture material is similar, which is shown at the beginning of the first phrase and the beginning of the second phase. This is also the motif material, which appears several times in the pieces.




Example 37: The end of Heat- Scarecrow in the Field, bar 1 and 3

In his own essay, the composer had documented, " There are two images here: one is the image of the ridiculous scarecrow, and the other is the chirping birds" (Liao, 2002, p.51). In the music, the motif of the scarecrow is played by the left hand, between bars 1 to 2 and 5 to 6.



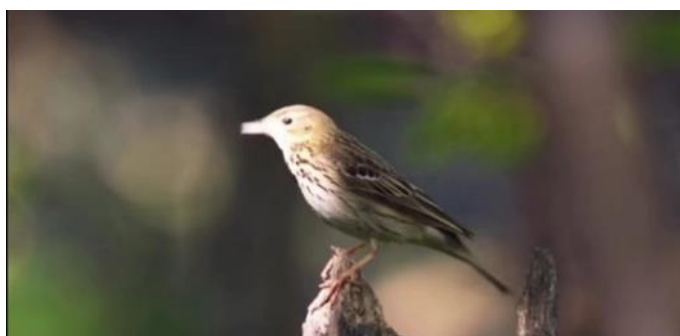
Picture 26: scarecrow

Part II (Bars 11-66) is divided into two sections, A (Bars 11-51), B (Bars 52-66), consisting of a wide variety of expressions, harmony, and rhythm.

In section A (Bars 11-51), the tempo is marked in *Allegro vivace*, indicating the liveliness of the musical expression. The added ornaments of this section appear four times each, imitating the chirping of the birds, and the rhythmic patterns of the  combinations are used several times at once. The rhythm of the bass line is mostly in staccato eighth notes, giving a lively feel to the overall background, as shown in the picture below.



Example 38: The end of Heat- Scarecrow in the Field, bar 11-16



Picture 27: The birds

In this section, the main motif appears several times, which represents the image of the scarecrow. In contrast with the chirping birds, which are represented by the ornaments.



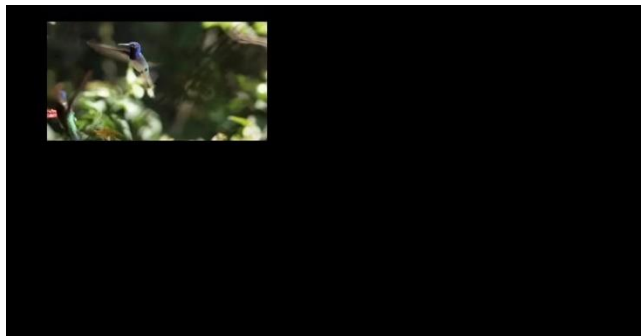
28

*mf* *marcato* *cresc.*

43 *a tempo* *mp* *cresc.*

Example 39: The end of Heat- Scarecrow in the Field, bar 28-37 and bar 43-51

Therefore, a sense of dynamism is created through the sequential entry of various images in the visual section.





Picture 28: Scarecrow and birds in juxtaposed framing

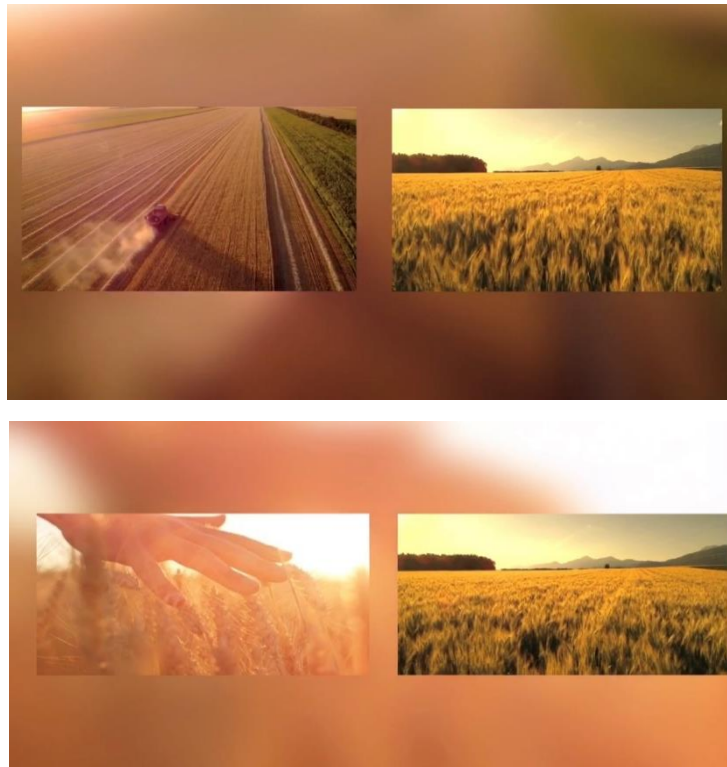
Section B (Bars 52-66) plays a faster transitional role than the previous section, with the tempo marking *Piu mosso*.

Part III (Bars 67-109) contains a simple binary time with *Tempo di marcia*. It differs considerably from parts I and II in terms of textures. This part shows more vertical writing and using the chords in the left hand to paraphrase the march steps.



Example 40: The end of Heat- Scarecrow in the Field, bar 67-73

In parts II and III, there are more variations in the images due to the differences in the stylistic features of the textures and harmonies. In part II, for example, there are mostly images of birds with overlapping images of birds and scarecrows. In part III, the meter and texture differ from part II, so in the visuals, a single figurative image - the field - is used to move through the perspective.



Picture 29: The Field

The Coda (110-124) is mainly an echo of the introduction material, highlighting the scarecrow. The visual content, therefore, returns to the initial image.

#### 4.5.1 Feuilles Mortes

According to author Siglind Bruhn, the title of this piece may have been influenced by Arthur Rackham's illustration, Joy of a Fallen Leaf. This idea was disputed as the picture was a joyful expression. However, the emotion of the prelude reveals a deep sadness, believed to be due to the composer being diagnosed with cancer at the time. Most scholars later suggested that the atmosphere of the piece was most likely derived from poems written by Debussy's friend Gabriel Mourey, titled *Voix éparses*. The Prelude's title is not a reference to any of the poems in the collection, but the central part of the collection<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Voix éparses* (Paris: Librairie des Bibliophiles, 1883) I: Les bonheurs envolés, les ivresses fiévreuses, Les rêves disparus, les choses du passé, Tout ce que le destin a naguère effacé, Tout cela se retrouve en vous, forêts charmeuses! Dans la sonorité des horizons lointains, Dans le bruit solennel de vos grandes ramures, on sent gémir sans cesse, avec tous leurs murmures, Les espoir, les soupirs et les sanglots humains. Moi, j' ai senti ton charme ineffable et sublime, J' ai saisi dans tes voix les voix de l' Infini. Et dans mon rêve immense, o forêt, j' ai béni Les grands enchantements de la main qui t' anime!

captures a similar mood to that of this work by Debussy (Bruhn, 1997, p.172-173).

Musically speaking, the first chord at the beginning is the F# dominant ninth chord in the key signature of C# minor. It falls into the second chord with a parallel progression as if it is mimicking a sigh. The melodic line then continues to sing sadly, based on a vague harmony of the baseline. All these textures, with weak rhythmic and dynamic intensity, create a melancholy and hazy atmosphere.



Example 41: Feuilles mortes, bar 1-3

From bar 10, the musical material adds a new pattern. The tonal aspect is delivered by the pedal point in G, above the bass line, and a set of extended aggregate chords create a hazy sound effect. Dissimilar to the sustains of the traditional dominant, the sustains do not have a strong propensity to resolve, but rather dilute the process of tension sound to resolution. This is due to the inconsistency of the sustains with the chordal harmony in soprano and the building of a colourful soundscape with very little sound material.



Example 42: Feuilles mortes, bar 10-14

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VII: La forêt gémissait sous le vent de l'automne, Mélancolique et froid: les arbres défeuillés, Tremblaient sinistrement sur leurs vieux troncs souillés, En un lugubre écho de plainte monotone. Et la nuit descendait sous le ciel sans lueurs, Rapide, enveloppant comme d'un noir suaire Les horizons éteints; dans le bois solitaire S'agitaient vaguement d'indécises pâleurs . . . Des ombres qui fuyaient, tendrement enlacées . . . Les âmes de tous ceux qui s'aimèrent jadis, S'envolant vers l'azur des lointains paradis, Après l'expiation des ivresses passés.

The chosen visual material combines the theme with the tempo of the performance. The imagery of dead leaves blown off a tree by the wind corresponds to the musical movement and emotion. The overall color palette of the image is somber, accompanying the decaying atmosphere.



Picture 30: Dead leaves blown by the wind

Bars 19-30 are marked *Un peu plus allant et plus gravement expressif*. In bars 19-24, the alto and bass voice are in a fixed texture. The soprano can be divided into two voices, the first uses a rising octatonic scale, the second a harmony is supported vertically with the same harmonic structure below the melody. The four superimposed chords in bars 19-24 are quite different from the traditional superimposed chords in thirds. The use of whole-tone chords breaks away from the functional relationship of traditional modes, and the vertical combination of the modes makes the melody of the theme unconfined to a single line, but a cloud-like overlapping block of notes, creating a hazier sound in its entirety. In the bass line, an *ostinato* motif appears chromatic and slide in appearance, together with the rise of the melodic line creating a life sign. In bars 25-30, There are two tonal layers of music. The first tonal layer contains the soprano *ostinato* and the melody of the alto voice, while the second tonal layer is the bass with the fixed tetrachord based on the G# pedal point.

**Un peu plus allant et plus gravement expressif**

*pp*      *simile*



Example 43: Feuilles mortes, bar 19-28

In this section of the aural effect, a bell-like sound and linear melodies emerge, the visual image of the moving leaf represents the melody, and the background image of the mound of dead leaves represents the bell's movement.



Picture 31: Dead leaves

Bars 31-40 is tempo marked *Plus lent* and containing two phrases. The first phase continues in the key of F# from the previous part, the second moves to G#. New material is added here with a quick motif in thirty-second note triplets dropped to a dotted eighth note. In addition to continuing with the visual material, the new material incorporates the Kallima inachus butterfly in a dark colour tones, expressing a sense of transformation.



Picture 32: Kallima inachus

Bars 41-52 reproduces the motif of the beginning, which is also marked by the composer as *dans le sentiment du début*, so that the texture and harmony are the same as the start. The visual images also peruse dead leaves.

#### 4.5.2 Pure Brightness- Remembering a Loved One Who has Passed Away (清明-墓前追远)

Pure Brightness (清明) is a term from the 5<sup>th</sup> Solar Calendar for mid-spring and is a time for the wearing of traditional costumes for praying to the ancestors and cleaning their tombs. For this special and mournful day, the composer created music based on his narrative of "On Pure Brightness, people pour out their sorrows silently at the graves with reverence for their ancestors" (清明时节，人们怀着对先辈的崇敬，在墓前默默地倾诉心里的哀思). Therefore, combined with the narrative, the images chosen symbolise elements of mourning, namely the tombs, the willow leaves, and the shadows of father and son holding hands.

The musical form is based on a single concept of grief, it develops from an introduction section into melodic theme and diversifies into a new segment with texture and dynamic changes. In the end, the main theme returns to emphasize the tone of melancholy and sadness.

The introduction (bars 1-6) is composed of two similar phrases. The mode is B $\flat$  YuGong. Beside of this composition Liao referred: " The slanted note G  $\flat$  that appears in bars 4 and 20 is treated as a particular tone that was inspired by the sad tone of northern regional opera, such as Peking opera, and does not need to be resolved here in order to get an emotion" (Liao, 2002, p.51).



Example 44: Pure Brightness- Remembering a loved one who has passed away, bar 3-4

In the introduction, the tempo and rhythm are not so severe, the two phrases are similar, so the visual material was chosen to incorporate the reflection of the willow tree in the water and was superimposed by the image with the tree's upward perspective.



Picture 33: Willows in different angle of view

The first appearance of the main theme (Bars 7-15) contains two phrases, still in B $\flat$  YuGong. The bass voice consists of groups of four continuous 16th notes, with the E $\flat$  repeatedly appearing as an accessory tone in the soprano. In the performance, if the bass voice is played without variation in intensity, it does not bring out the sad mood of the theme. Therefore, the four groups of 16th notes in each bar, are divided into two groups, and the last sixteenth note of each group is highlighted and connected in a descending direction to create a choro tone.



Example 45: Pure Brightness- Remembering a loved one who has passed away, bar 6-7

In the visuals, the shadows of father and son holding hands to stimulate the sensation of sadness, while the reflection of the willow leaves represents empty time.



Picture 34: Shadows and willow leaves



The variation of the theme is situated between bars 16 and 20. The texture of the soprano becomes denser, using chord progression with fortissimo intensity. The baseline is presented in two voices, the central voice reproduces the thematic material of the introduction, which continues the tone of sadness.



Example 46: Pure Brightness- Remembering a loved one who has passed away, bar 16-19

To compliment the tension of the sound, visual material from a traditional Chinese graveyard was selected.



Picture 35: graveyard and walking on grass

The main theme returns (bars 21-30), with a similar texture and harmony the first thematic passage. Therefore, the visual choice of combining the image of the shadows with the willows, with darker toned colours, enhances the melancholic atmosphere.



Picture 36: The willows with shadows

#### 4.6.1 Le Vent dans la Plaine

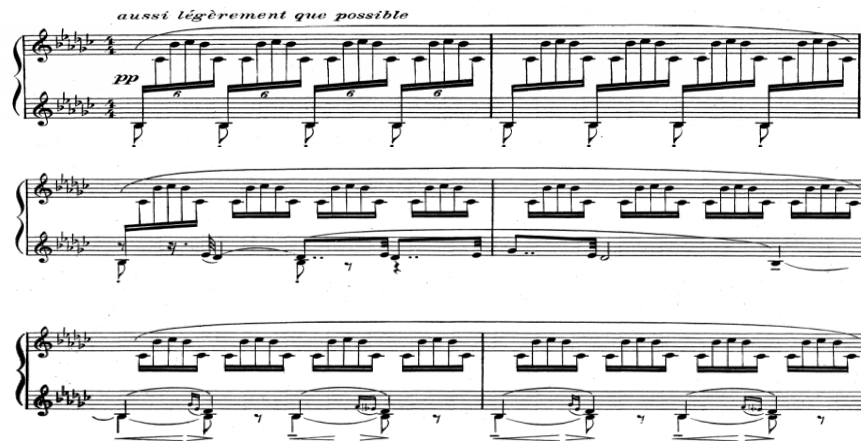
This composition by Debussy was inspired by the poem *Le vent dans la plaine* *Suspend son haleine* written by the French symbolist poet Paul Verlaine<sup>7</sup>. The title seems to pretend to hide the emotion of a languid ecstasy that the poem portrays. The loving fatigue, the crying, and the grieving soul, all these sentiments are symbolized by elements of nature, such as trees, breezes, gray branches, water, and pebbles in the poem.

In his music, Debussy took advantage of this textual symbolism and created fluctuating movements to paraphrase the atmosphere of the wind stirring in the trees and grasses, and water running through pebbles, smoothing them until they lose all their edges. Throughout the music, the crying and grieving souls are highlighted by the texture and dynamic changes, from floating and horizontal textures to chordal and vertical textures, and from dynamic *PP* to *F*.

The form of this Prelude is structured in A, B, A1, and coda. Part A (bars 1-27) starts with a motivic harmony and rhythm, as in the example, this sextuplet's rhythm and wind-like sound mass appear throughout the piece. In bars 3-6 the melody appears in the middle line, followed by a pentatonic scale, Debussy created a colourful horizontal harmony to avoid the harmonic functionality, although he put the B<sup>b</sup> as the pedal point (dominant of the original key E flat minor).

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<sup>7</sup> C'est l'extase langoureuse, C'est la fatigue amoureuse, C'est tous les frissons des bois, Parmi l'étreinte des brises, C'est, vers les ramures grises, Le chœur des petites voix. Ô le frêle et frais murmure! Cela gazouille et susurre, Cela ressemble au cri doux Que l'herbe agitée expire... Tu dirais, sous l'eau qui vire, Le roulis sourd des cailloux. Cette âme qui se lamente, En cette plainte dormante C'est la nôtre, n'est-ce pas? La mienne, dis, et la tienne, Dont s'exhale l'humble antienne, Par ce tiède soir, tout bas?



Example 47: Le vent dans la plaine, Bars 1-6

The video element captures the emotional colours of the poem and expresses them in a mirror image of the meadow. The presence of the wind is expressed through the swaying of the leaves and the movement of the clouds.



Picture 37: Mirror image of the plain

In bars 9-12 new melodic and harmonic materials appear, proceeding through continuous seventh chords in a downward thirds melodic line, and based on the pedal point with the fifth interval between tonic ( $E^b$ ) and dominant ( $B^b$ ). Together with this musical change, the image of the video also transforms into a pebble-filled flowing stream.



Picture 38: Flowing stream with pebbles

In Part B (28-33), the musical atmosphere is moved into a great tension, not only by the forte contrast intensity between *F* and *P*, but also by the texture thickening through the vertical chordal writing based on the fifth interval oscillation in the bass line. Simultaneously, the tonality is changed to  $G^b$  major, along with the rapid movement of large jumps between the chords, they create a sensation of impetuosity and radiance. This section is expressed in the video by images of a lightning storm in the meadow. It should be noted that the rhythm of the lightning in the images is consistent with the rhythm of the jumping of the chords.



Picture 39: Storm and Lighting

Between bars 34 and 43, there is a bridge to return to the opening section. Debussy used the same texture from part A, although it was based on the more chromatic harmony passages. The restoration of part A is established at bar 44, where Original Key in  $E^b$  minor is also re-established. The video reintroduces the images of the opening sequence to recall past sensations with less sorrow.

#### 4.6.2 Frost's Descent- Cold and Bleak Late Autumn (霜降-秋声萧瑟)

Frost's Descent is the last of the 24 solar calendar terms representing autumn, which coincides with the time when the weather gradually becomes colder. In the narrative, the composer wrote: "In the late autumn season, the west wind blows and brings the increasingly cold weather. When looking at the dead grass and leaves, hearing the wailing of insects and the sougning of falling leaves, who could not be sad?" (深秋霜降, 阵阵西风凉。望大地草木, 一片枯黄, 听昆虫哀鸣, 树叶飘落飒飒响, 怎不令人惆怅) Accordingly, the overall emotional tone of the piece is sad and melancholic. The basic visual elements are also cool in color, comprising of frost in a field, dead leaves and insects, and the migration of wild geese.

The musical form of this work is a simple ternary, which can be divided into parts A, B, A1, coda.

Part A (bars 1-21) consists of four phrases. The overall tempo is marked *Adagio*, in the Mode of F# Zhishang (徵商). The rhythm of the bass line is composed of a fixed pattern

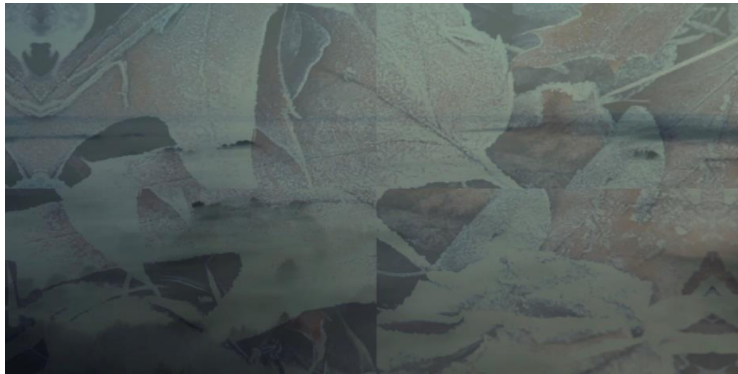


The character cantabile of the soprano line from the weak beat interrupts the contrast between the strong and weak measures, making the whole sentence more fluid.



Example 48: Frost's Descent- Cold and bleak late autumn, bar 1-3

The timbre and the wavering rhythm of the music are highlighted in the video; therefore, the images have a fluid appearance and the colours correspond to the cold sonority. A frost-covered field was selected as a background to highlight the chill of late autumn, with the addition of grass and dead leaves into the image. After superimposing the images, a combination animation selected in the editing software and the timing of the movement of the images were set so that it would be a moving visual.



Picture 40: Grass and dead leaves

Part B (bars 22-47) contains two phrases, the second of which is an expansion of the first, forming an asymmetrical parallel section. The melodic element shows variations compared to that of Part A, although the same texture remains. The rhythm of the bassline lost the fixed pattern of Part A, changing into a more linear movement.

A change in timbre is required in the performance to create a clear contrast with Part A. In the first phase, the intensity of the melody does not change much, so there is no prominent dynamic contrast in the performance. In the second phase, however, there is a dynamic change from bar 33 onwards, with the *crescendo* marked *mp-mf-f-ff-f-fff*. In the visuals, the first phrase is expressed with birds and dead leaves in a single tone. The second phase introduces insects into the visuals, creating colourful contrast to the first phase.





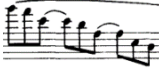

Picture 41: Dead leaves with birds and insects

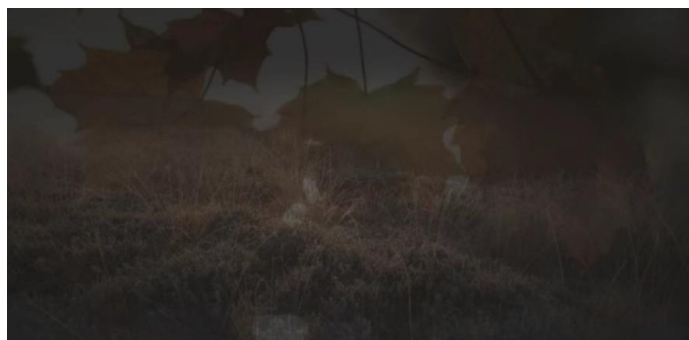
Part A1 (bars 48-69) returns to the initial materials and textures and expands on the fourth phrase (bars 62-69), in which the soprano line increases the thickness of melodic texture from simple notes to chords, and the timbral colour gets brighter.



Example 49: Frost's Descent- Cold and bleak late autumn, bar 64-67

Consequently, the visuals of this part reveal similar imagery, with only the colour adjusted to colder tones.

The Coda (bars 70-77) is based on the  and  variants of Part B, which are hazier in terms of sound. Therefore, the visual choice is a combination of materials from sections A and B.



Picture 42: Grass and leaves

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the analysing and performing experiences of the Piano Preludes written by C. Debussy and S. Liao, and in the recreation of the music in video clips, this research proved that when an optimized connection and interpretation between music and image is activated and merged, new sensations and imaginary reactions can arise and bring new meanings to the multimedia music performance. This study also demonstrated that from the pianist's point of view and using synaesthesia to interchange the aural and visual senses, a mutual complementation of various audio-visual components is developed, such as narrative, texture, colours, rhythms, harmonies, and so on.

Such mutual complementarity, in the aural sense, helps the performer to better optimise and define the sensorial and emotional performing aspects, based on the understanding and imagination of the music textures and timbres to correspond the colour and framework of the images. Visually, the construction of the images expresses the performer's specific synaesthetic sense from the music. Although each performer has a different understanding and colour sense of the same music, the definition of a fixed visual image could help the performer to get better control of the aural sense and the playing movements in the performance.

Besides the literature reviews and the analysis of specific works, the field research has also been carried out, and some of the works combined with audio-visuals have been published on online platforms to get specific feedback from the audience, thus achieving a two-way connection between performer and audience.

The study was able to obtain a practical result of music performance and video creation, achieving a bidirectional connection in the performative action, placed in a particular space and time of communication. In a broader view, the aspects of interdisciplinary artistic fusion in performance were highlighted in this study, which can be useful to explore artistic research in the empirical studies that cross different cultures contexts and conducted to further test and refine these results.



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