

Jennifer Lin

Mansfield State High School

Wind, Chin Cheng

Libertango, Astor Piazzolla (arranged by Eric Sammut)

Performance Statement

Given the extended time restriction for this assessment, I intend to perform a stylistically diverse program to further develop my musicianship skills. The first piece I have chosen to perform is a four-mallet melodious piece titled *Wind*, by Taiwanese marimbist, Chin Cheng Lin. The second piece is an exhilarating rendition of Piazzolla's famous work, *Libertango*, arranged by French percussionist Eric Sammut. Through the manipulation of musical elements, my aim for this assessment is to deliver a contrasting and stylistically appropriate program.

Music elements, expressive devices and duration, were predominantly used to convey the sentimentality and tenderness of *Wind*. As a lyrical piece, I experimented with release techniques to produce a warmer, more resonant tone. These techniques, especially in the form of heavy, round strokes in the lower registers (particularly in bars 29-38) acted as a timeless, underlying support to the melody, resulting in a sense of nostalgia. Rather than creating a 'lingering in the moment' feeling, I decided to perform more like a 'passing memory' feeling by using less intense rubato and playing at a more consistent, driving tempo as the piece built up. To enhance the four bar melodic phrases after the climatic modulation to C sharp major (bar 97), I exaggerated the phrasing by incorporating frequent dynamic swells. This resulted in a greater range of expression, complimenting the style of the piece.

The same music elements, expressive devices and duration, were manipulated contrastingly in *Libertango* to create an opposing force to *Wind*. To perform with contrast, I used harder, pointed shape mallets for more clarity in articulation, an important feature in tango music. The pointed shape also allowed effortless contrast between melodic notes and ghosted arpeggiated notes. This ghosting technique not only added more clarity to the melodic line, it also brought out the 3-3-2 pulse, stylistically appropriate to tango music. To deliver a visually authentic performance in the style of tango, I rehearsed movements in the body and in the arms to compliment this exhilarating style of music.

Thus, musical elements, particularly expressive devices and duration, and performance aspects were employed to deliver my individualised performance.

Wind, Chin Cheng

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Reflective Statement

Since I was to perform a stylistically diverse program, it was important to be inspired by various performances to deliver a stylistically appropriate performance.

When listening to Chin Cheng Lin's original performance of *Wind*, I quite liked the tempo he was playing at 0:39. As a lyrical piece, many performers tend to perform excessively rubato, which makes the music drag on. However, Lin's slightly pushed tempo creates a spur of the moment feeling, making his performance more enticing to the audience. When observing an amateur performance by Robert Yang, I noticed his performance lacked good tone, particularly in the semiquaver section at 2:35. A melodious piece like *Wind* requires a warm, thick layer of sound to support the melodic line. After further observation of Robert's performance, I discovered his release stroke was often too light and weak which resulted in the sound disappearing into thin air. Thus, I experimented with release techniques to ensure my sound not only carried, but also resonated in the tubes longer to provide underlying support to the melody.

After watching Sam Um's performance of *Libertango*, I noticed his stick height, throughout the piece, was minimal and controlled which helped him to play up to speed without costing his energy. To deliver a more stylistically appropriate performance of *Libertango*, I also watched an orchestral rendition of the original *Libertango* by Piazzolla. While it was quite different to the marimba arrangement, I thought accenting the first pulse in every 3-3-2 subdivision was very effective in obtaining rhythmic strictness in the orchestra as well as enhancing the lustful style of tango music.

While my selected pieces were contrasting in style, overarching techniques such as loosening my grip to conserve energy was applied to both pieces. This, along with performance-inspired techniques, were largely considered to deliver an effortless, stylistically appropriate performance.

Performance

References

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