

MUSIC

Performance Self-Appraisal

Critical Appraisal

Preparedness

This piece was well-prepared and I had performed in front of my peers and a Year 8 class before the exam, so by comparing this performance to last year's, my nerves weren't as much as before so the accuracy of notes was better. This proved that performing in front of other people before exams is very helpful in reducing nerves, as the feedback from the audience built up my confidence. But I should have performed more and be more concentrated while playing as there were still a few note inaccuracies – 2nd bass note in bar 38, and 1st note of melody line in bar 45, as well as the fact that this is the 2nd take.

Technical Skills

The level of technical skills was only developed. To refine this area I need to work on rubato, balancing between hands, tonality and dynamics, incorporate a little bit of rubato in between two themes, melt the end of a section into another so that it doesn't sound that harsh which ruins the peaceful tone of that piece (the end of bar 43, as it is a new theme). More gradual rit and decrescendo from the 2nd last system to the end of this piece to create a 'fade away' effect (portraying the 'ceasing wind'). For the last note, left hand should play softer than right hand as the bass note eventually drowned the high note. Same applies to bars 44-47, bring out the melody a bit more. When playing the octaves in the climax (bars 34-38), play the notes with more warmth and rounded as it sounded a bit too harsh which broke the innocent and calm tone. Try to play the bridge passage (bars 25-29) softer in order to add more contrast in dynamics and interest of this piece.

Interpretation

The story I conveyed was pretty successful. Yet it could be better if I fixed the points mentioned above. Also, the touch of the 1st note wasn't soft and light enough to portray 'gentle wind'.

Interpretative decision

In fact, in the score there are no dynamic or rubato markings, only an expressive term “sempre calmo” (calm) even though there is a change of theme in bar 41 (mysterious and dark tone). I think this is one of the features of the 20th century music where the composer wants the performers to interpret and explore the music by themselves or may be purely just for portraying the peacefulness of ‘wind chime’. However, as the melody is very repetitive so in order to create interest, I discussed with my piano and music teachers on ways to bring contrasts and differences between sections. Therefore we made decisions on where to change dynamics and add rubatos or rit.

Presentation

I was sitting at the edge of the chair, although it was how I normally sit, and I was slightly hunched while walking and performing, so I looked like I was a bit uncomfortable and with lack of confidence. Therefore, next time I should sit on half of the chair and try to straighten my back so that I will look like I am playing with confidence.