

# The Research on the Current Situation and Multicultural Significance of Chinese Music Festivals

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## Abstract:

With the development of music and the exchange of cultures around the world, music festivals have become a famous form of cultural exchange in music. Music festivals have a wide impact on people's lives, and the diverse cultures they contain also have a certain importance for social development. This article takes two types of music festivals in China as the research object. Based on describing the genre characteristics of MIDI and Strawberry Music Festival, it uses literature reading method to study the current situation of domestic music festivals and attempts to analyze the positive impact of multiculturalism. Through research results, we can find that music festivals can enhance public aesthetic awareness, promote regional cultural tourism and economic development, create a cultural exchange stage, and enhance the identity recognition of music fans. This study analyzes the current situation of music festivals, which helps to enrich the connotation of music festivals, and hopes to make certain research contributions in this field.

**Keywords:** Music festivals; situation; multicultural; significance.

## 1. Introduction

Music industry is an emerging innovative research direction. To trace the reason for the rise of music industry, it has to mention a social phenomenon. As the development of the society, different age groups suffer from mental and physical stresses for different reasons. For example, adults should work very hard to support themselves and even their families; students are urged to spend most of their time on their assignment or other after-class courses in order to get good grade in their class and finally get the admissions

to top universities; the elderly people feel pressured because they are afraid that their health may burden their children. Therefore, everyone needs space and opportunities to relax themselves. Under such social background, many experts and scholars devote to curating music festivals of different genres to serve the different needs of the public, such as jazz, rock, folk, electronic, and also Chinese traditional music. As Outdoor music festival is an open music exhibition space with leisure, entertainment, social and cultural spirit consumption. Through this space, young peo-

ple can express themselves, showcase their personalities, and promote the spirit of pursuing freedom [1]. These various kinds of music can attract a number of people to enjoy, for example, the two-day Hainan Strawberry Music Festival 2020 attracted nearly 50,000 spectators, 78.6% of whom were visitors from outside Hainan Province [2].

Nowadays, music festivals can be seen everywhere in daily life. Music, as a universal language, it can be applied in almost all kinds of social activities and allows everyone to express certain emotions. Therefore, music festivals have a wide influence around the world and have become an indispensable part of people's lives [3]. This form contributes a lot to dissemination of music at home and abroad. What's more, mutual understanding and respect among cultures is promoted in the process of dissemination and integration of music.

To study and explore the present state of music festivals and multicultural influences and meanings of music festivals, this article will focus on analyzing different music festivals. The first part will describe types of characteristics of the genres of two music festivals: MIDI music festival and Strawberry music festival, and the second part will introduce the setting and significance of multiculturalism in music festivals.

## 2. Present Circumstance of Domestic Music Festivals

With the increasingly close economic, technological, and cultural connections among countries around the world, the impact of diverse music cultures on China's traditional music culture is becoming more significant and profound [4]. Different music cultures are also exchanging and fusing, so the types of music festivals in China are gradually becoming more diverse, from early rock music festivals to various genres, such as electronic music, folk music, hip-hop, etc. The most representative outdoor music festivals in China are Midi Music Festival and Strawberry Music Festival [5]. In 2000, Midi Music School held the first domestic music festival. The Midi is a music festival which is the first music festival in China founded by Beijing Midi Music School. After years of development, it has now become one of the most well-known and popular music festival brands. The Strawberry Music Festival is hosted by Modern Sky, the largest music record company in China, and has been holding outdoor music festivals since 2009 [5].

### 2.1 Current Situation of MIDI Music Festival Style

Since its inception to the present, the scale of Midi has

been expanding year by year, and the performance venues have also expanded from Beijing to multiple cities across the country. As a cultural ritual, the Midi can bring thousands of music fans together across the country as a community, build a meaningful cultural group that can accommodate behaviors that contain the mainstream culture, and create an atmosphere and process of cultural sharing [6]. At present, the Midi Music Festival has formed a year-round touring mode with spring Beijing station, summer Shanghai station, autumn Shenzhen station, and winter Harbin station. The performance lineup of Midi Music Festival is rich and diverse, including well-known rock bands in China as well as top rock bands from around the world. Among them, there are some new generation bands and independent musicians whose joining has injected new vitality into the Midi Music Festival. Every year's performance, the Midi has a theme and slogan that inspires and inspires the thoughts and actions of young Chinese people.

In 2006, at the 7th Midi Music Festival held in Haidian Park, Beijing, the number of main stages increased to 4, and over 50 music groups from around the world performed brilliantly, incorporating not only rock music but also various forms of music such as electronics and hip-hop. In 2007, the 8th Music Festival was even more grand. HIP-POP stage was added on the basis of the last four stages. At the same time, "Ballad Day" was added to the electronic test stage on the the fourth day, which was the first time Midi introduced folk songs. In the 17th Music Festival in 2012, there were four stages set up on site: Vans Tang, Song, Yuan, and Qing. In the 18th Midi Music Festival, the music combines the characteristics of multi-ethnic cultures in Southwest China, and Tang, Yuan, and Huaxi stages are set up on site. The 19th Midi featured five stages: Vans Tang, Tiger Song, Qing, Mini, and Children's Midi. The stunning performance of the first Children's Midi and Mini stages was no less impressive than the other three stages, making it a unique highlight of the festival. This year's music festival also added an overseas lineup, led by the American metal core group The Ghost Inside and the Danish hard rock band D-A-D, as well as 17 bands including the American retro undercurrent Cold Cave, Finnish melodic metal Amor, Bavarian metal Emergency Gate, Swiss modern industrial metal band Sybreed, and specially invited Swiss percussion band Bubble Beatz, the multiplicity of the music festival can be further enriched. The 2024 Midi Music Festival has reached new heights in both scale and influence. The music festival is located in a famous tourist destination in China, attracting tourists and music enthusiasts from all over the country and even the world. During the four-day event, over 200 bands participated in performances, cov-

ering various music genres such as rock, folk, and electronics, catering to the preferences of different audiences. The 2024 Midi Music Festival has made careful arrangements in terms of program content (Fig.1). In addition to exciting music performances, it also includes various interactive experience activities, such as environmental public welfare activities, artist workshops, etc., allowing audiences to enjoy music while also participating in more cultural activities. The Midi Music Festival has always embraced various types of music with an inclusive and open attitude. The 2024 music festival is no exception, featuring not only traditional rock bands but also independent musicians, electronic music producers, and others whose performances provide a rich music experience for the live audience.



Fig. 1 Midi festival 2024 poster [7]

## 2.2 Content of Strawberry Music Festival

The Strawberry Music Festival was founded in 2009 by Modern Sky which is a new brand. It has been held almost every year since 2009, and strawberry music festivals around the world have become the first choice for rock fans to celebrate. After years of accumulation, the Strawberry Music Festival has deeply rooted itself as a music venue that music fans in Xi'an and the northwest region must visit every early summer. As of now, this festival has successfully held over 120 performances, with more than 4200 artists on stage, and social media related topics with over 4 billion views [8]. Among them, the 2023 Strawberry Music Festival in Changsha attracted over 50000 participants within two days; In 2022, the audience of Strawberry Music Festival in Guiyang reached over 30000 people, achieving ticket revenue of over 10 million yuan and driving various tourism consumption of over 13 million yuan [8]. The 2023th festival is divided into six stages: Strawberry Stage, Love Stage, MDSK Stage, Planet Stage, Yong Blood Stage, and MSE Stage. From these six stages, it can be seen that the content of this Music Festival is diverse. In addition, AR experience is also added on-site, using interactive AR applications to allow the audience to immerse themselves in the music festival and have a better experience(Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 The AR experience site of the Strawberry Music Festival[9]

## 3. The Setting and Significance of Multiculturalism in Music Festivals

### 3.1 Enhance the Public's Aesthetic Sense

Watching music festivals is a way to enjoy themselves for young people nowadays. Music is an important way for people's aesthetic education, and different types of music can cultivate people's aesthetic ability and artistic appreciation. Meanwhile, music is also an important way for people to express their emotions, and different styles of music can convey different emotions and moods. Just like in the Midi Music Festival, there are both domestic and overseas music, as well as music styles from different ethnic groups in a country, allowing people to understand the excellent culture of different countries and ethnic groups through music, thereby enhancing people's aesthetics and connotation.

### 3.2 Drive Regional Cultural Tourism and Economic Development

With the increase in the number of music festivals in recent years, the venues of music festivals are no longer limited to first-tier megacities. Many second-and third-tier cities and tourist cities are now holding outdoor pop music festivals [6].At the social level, A music festival can bring economy to the place where it is held, as it attracts a large number of out-of-town tourists, for example, the two-day Hainan Strawberry Music Festival 2020 attracted nearly 50,000 spectators, 78.6% of whom were visitors from outside Hainan Province [10]. Setting up performances through music festivals, local cultural tourism is being promoted, a lot of music festivals which held in different areas combined with divers regional characteristics to attract audiences. For example, Midi Music Festival in Hailar, Inner Mongolia in July 2023 attracted many music fans from the south to come to the grasslands, experience

local ethnic culture, and promote the consumption of local cultural and creative products.

### 3.3 Creating a Cultural Exchange Stage

The music industry is a very important industry in modern society, it can not only bring economic benefits to a country, but also promote cultural exchanges between countries. In the music industry, music festival is a popular form of cultural exchange. With the development of music and the exchange of cultures around the world, Music festivals have become a famous form of musical culture exchange. For example, Jazz is a popular type of music in music festivals.

Jazz, as a new type of music, has its charming charm and is loved and concerned by musicians for its unique musical form [11]. In the new era of modern Chinese music, the dialogue between Chinese local music and Western music has been more fully demonstrated. Some works in modern Chinese music reflect the accidental and random intuitionism of Western “uncertain music”, which is closer to the intuitive thinking characterized by improvisation in traditional Chinese music [11]. Not only jazz, but also various types of music from all over the world in music festivals reflect the point, and this can let people know different kinds of music, then, music festivals become the stage to promote the cultural exchange.

### 3.4 Enhance the Identity Recognition of Music Fans

Some of the music fans like minority types of music, like Ethnic Rock, they find it difficult to find people in their daily lives who share the same hobbies as them, and during the music festival, there may also be blending or debate between different styles of music [12], people can enhance their self-identity or better understand others' preferences through different types of music.

With the increasing burden of social pressure and work pressure, the emergence of music festivals has indeed brought convenience to more working people to release stress and liberate their nature. Nowadays, in this rapidly developing society, niche songs that were not previously recognized by the public and were innovative are gradually replacing the traditional pop music in music festivals. Perhaps the monotonous music cannot release the stress of contemporary youth, or they may want to find unique joy in the dull life to satisfy their inner desires. More and more niche music is being recognized by the public, and more and more niche bands are appearing at music festivals. Like today's hottest second-hand rose, a band playing ethnic rock, second-hand rose, as an emerging cultural phenomenon, provides a platform for young people to

showcase their individuality and pursue unique culture. Their music combines the passion and power of rock with the tenderness and warmth of folk songs, allowing people to feel the beauty and meaning of life while listening to music. His music enriches the cultural life of music fans, enabling them to find their own sense of cultural belonging and identity through their music when facing a single and homogeneous cultural environment. Secondly, the aesthetic impact of second-hand roses on music fans cannot be ignored. It breaks traditional aesthetic concepts and accepts and appreciates various art forms and styles with a more diverse and inclusive attitude. This shift in aesthetic perception has made music fans pay more attention to personalization and innovation, dare to challenge tradition, and pursue self-expression and realization.

## 4. Conclusion

Music festivals are a popular and comprehensive way of musical and cultural exchange in contemporary times. In recent years, the development of music festivals has been very optimistic, such as the midi music festival mentioned in the article, in 2023, the Yantai Huangbohai New Area Midi Music Festival is the original music festival in China to exceed 100,000 people, and it is also the first music festival to sell out. According to relevant statistics, the daily flow of the Midi Music Festival in recent years is nearly 30,000. The festival is more popular with contemporary young people because of its modern style, and contains a variety of music forms and music cultures of various countries, such as the annual Midi Music Festival, which presents different countries and styles of music on the stage, so that people can relax and relax at the same time, improve their musical literacy, and make friends with similar interests. In addition, as technology has evolved, music festivals have also incorporated technology, such as Strawberry Music Festival, which incorporates AR technology to immerse audiences in the scene.

Due to the advantages of the above music festivals, more and more people come to watch the music festival, so that the development of the music festival is getting better and better, which can not only promote the economic development of the places where the music festival is held, but also improve the employment rate of musicians, thereby promoting social and economic development. Therefore, the benefits of hosting a music festival are optimistic.

This article only gives two examples of music festivals and analyzes them, but the results of the analysis may not be comprehensive, and there is no focus on overseas music festivals. Future scholars can analyze more cases of music festivals and focus on overseas music festivals to make more detailed analyses.

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