Reconstructing Tradition Online: Business Models and Cultural Identity in Post-Pandemic Concerts of Traditional Chinese Instrumental Music

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Abstract: *Since the COVID-19 pandemic, online concerts have gradually evolved from a temporary solution to the suspension of live performances into a normalized form of musical presentation, gaining increasing significance in both cultural dissemination and commercial operations. This paper focuses on the transformation of business models for online concerts of traditional Chinese instrumental music in the post-pandemic era. Drawing on media ecology theory and the perspective of the digital cultural industry, the study explores how technological media, platform strategies, and audience interaction have reshaped performance practices and cultural transmission mechanisms. Through qualitative analysis of selected cases, the research reveals that online performances not only expand the space for artistic access and public participation but also facilitate cultural identity construction and cross-cultural communication. However, challenges such as platform dependency, content homogenization, and unclear monetization models remain pressing. This study argues that achieving sustainable development in online concerts of traditional instrumental music requires a balance between artistic quality, technological innovation, and audience engagement. It further proposes theoretical insights and practical suggestions to support the long-term growth of traditional Chinese music in the digital age.*

Keywords: Post-Pandemic Era, Online Concerts, Cultural Identity, Digital Operation, Cultural Industry

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1. Research background

Concerts, as a performance format originating in the West, were introduced to China in modern times and gradually integrated with local musical traditions, evolving into a vital vehicle for the dissemination of high art. They serve not only as a key public channel for experiencing classical music and artistic performance but also as a regular means through which higher arts institutions showcase their educational outcomes and enhance public musical literacy. However, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 abruptly disrupted this norm. In an effort to contain the virus, large-scale offline events were widely cancelled across China, while theatres and concert halls overseas were temporarily closed due to social distancing measures. As a labor-intensive industry reliant on physical gatherings and live interaction, concert performance suffered a severe blow. According to Beijing Youth Daily, prestigious venues such as the Musikverein in Vienna, La Scala in Milan, and the Opéra National de Paris all announced cancellations of scheduled performances in the spring of that year (Lun, Tian, & Liu, 2020).

Against the backdrop of nationwide home quarantine, remote work and online education quickly became the norm. Arts institutions and conservatories responsible for music creation and education also transitioned to digital platforms. On the one hand, they continued music instruction through online means; on the other hand, they launched online concerts—most in the form of public benefit performances—through livestreaming platforms. With a significant reduction in performance schedules, this emergent format rapidly filled the gap left by offline cancellations. Entering the post-pandemic era, although in-person concerts have gradually resumed, online concerts have not faded away. Instead, due to their convenience, broad reach, and integrated technological advantages, they have become increasingly normalized and platformized, accelerating the emergence of a hybrid performance ecology in which online and offline concerts coexist. What began as an emergency response has evolved into a complex cultural product that combines communicative value, technological sophistication, and commercial potential. This transformation calls for a re-examination of the cultural functions, business models, and societal implications of online concerts.

As an essential component of China's traditional cultural heritage, traditional Chinese instrumental music has likewise embraced online formats. The rise of virtual performances is not only a result of technological empowerment but also a reflection of shifting strategies in cultural transmission. In the post-pandemic era, how such concerts can continue to develop within a new digital ecosystem—and become a meaningful bridge between tradition and modernity, the local and the global, art and market—deserves in-depth exploration.

1.1 Problem Statement

Although online performance has become a significant form of music and cultural dissemination, its application within the field of traditional Chinese instrumental music still faces multiple challenges and uncertainties. The modes of presentation on digital platforms, audience reception mechanisms, and the sustainability of operational models have yet to establish a stable paradigm. Meanwhile, issues such as platform dependency, content homogenization, and a lack of deep audience interaction continue to hinder further development. Against this backdrop, it is necessary to conduct a systematic study of the business logic and cultural functions of online concerts featuring traditional Chinese instrumental music, in order to clarify their positioning and potential within the emerging media environment.

1.2 Research Questions

This study revolves around the following three core questions:
  i. How have online concerts reshaped the performance mechanisms and dissemination pathways of traditional Chinese instrumental music?
 ii. What new roles can online performances of traditional Chinese instrumental music play in cultural identity formation and international communication?
iii. In the post-pandemic era, how can the business models of online concerts featuring traditional Chinese instrumental music be transformed to achieve sustainable development and generate new cultural functions?

1.3 Significance of the Study

At the theoretical level, this research contributes to the expanding academic discourse on the digital dissemination of Chinese traditional music by integrating perspectives from cultural management, media studies, and instrumental performance practice. It helps broaden the analytical scope of online performance studies. At the practical level, the study offers transferable models and strategies for concert planners, platform operators, arts institutions,

and conservatories. More importantly, this paper positions online concerts as an emerging cultural dissemination mechanism, exploring their potential functions in the reproduction of traditional arts and the implementation of national cultural strategies, thus bearing significant socio-cultural value.

1.4 Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on the business practices of online concerts featuring traditional Chinese instrumental music. It selects representative cases from 2020 to 2024, including performances organized by professional orchestras, independent musicians, and music institutions across major digital platforms such as Bilibili, WeChat Video Channels, Douyin, and Yangshipin. Rather than analyzing specific instruments or repertoires, the study emphasizes the transformation of performance formats, platform strategies, audience relationships, and operational models. Methodologically, the research is based primarily on document analysis, public platform data, and case observation. Due to limitations in accessing internal data from platforms and the lack of large-scale audience surveys, the study does not provide quantitative assessments of dissemination outcomes. Additionally, constrained by length and research scope, this paper does not engage in comparative analysis of overseas practices in traditional instrumental music dissemination, which could be further explored in future cross-cultural studies.

2. Literature Review

In recent years, scholarly research on online concerts has expanded across multiple dimensions, including transmission technology, cultural management, audience experience, and the reproduction of artistic forms. Particularly under the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, online concerts transitioned from provisional substitutes to institutionalized mechanisms, prompting in-depth reflections on their media characteristics, cultural functions, and sustainability. For traditional Chinese instrumental music, this transformation is not merely a technological update but a pathway toward cultural reconfiguration. This section reviews the relevant literature in five major areas.

First, from the perspective of performance mechanism and media transformation, online concerts are widely seen as a "de-theatricalized" restructuring of the conventional performance paradigm. Ma (2022) argues that online performances are increasingly detached from the dependence on physical stages and are developing into independent digital cultural products with their own artistic forms and dissemination logic. This shift relies not only on technologies such as live streaming, recording, and post-production editing but also requires reconfiguring the aesthetic experience in terms of visual language, pacing, and interaction design. Onderdijk et al. (2023) further introduce the theory of embodied musical cognition in virtual environments, proposing that immersive experiences, first-person perspectives, and technical feedback can partially compensate for the absence of physical presence. These insights provide a theoretical basis for how traditional Chinese instrumental performances may be adapted to the digital space, underscoring the importance of media context in shaping artistic perception. Secondly, the cultural communication value of online concerts is gaining growing scholarly attention. DeVereaux (2019) asserts that cultural management should not be regarded as a neutral administrative task, but rather as embedded within platform power structures and cultural discourse systems. In digital environments, visibility and expressive agency for marginalized cultures require particular attention. Shi (2022), through a case study of the National Centre for the Performing Arts' international online broadcasts, identifies four key strategies: high-quality curation, multilingual platforms, audio-visual enhancement, and joint

programming. These strategies offer a roadmap for building globally communicable online cultural products based on traditional Chinese instrumental music. Lai (2020), in a review of the Stern centennial tribute concert, highlights the importance of cross-cultural planning and emotional resonance in achieving successful international dissemination and audience empathy. Collectively, these studies suggest that the online dissemination of traditional Chinese instrumental music is not only about artistic reproduction but also constitutes a key component of China's cultural soft power and international storytelling strategy.

Research on platform logic and transmission pathways sheds light on the operational mechanisms of online concerts in a media-saturated society. Fitrinanda et al. (2022), applying media convergence theory, examine how virtual concerts are embedded into social platform infrastructures, stressing the impact of platform algorithms, user behavior, and interaction structures on content dissemination. Yang (2023), analyzing the Suzhou Chinese Orchestra, proposes a model of "cloud ensemble–thematic narrative–multi-platform synergy–audience segmentation," arguing that the compatibility between content design and platform technology determines the reach and depth of dissemination. On platforms such as Weibo, Douyin, and YouTube, traditional instrumental music must adapt to short-form and fragmented formats through visual storytelling, text embedding, and rhythm control to enhance its cultural accessibility.

From the perspective of audience experience and social psychology, Swarbrick et al. (2021) introduce the concepts of "social presence" and "kama muta" to explain how livestreamed performances are more likely than pre-recorded ones to elicit emotional engagement and a sense of community. Real-time comments, bullet chats, and performer interaction not only reshape conventional audience-performer relationships but also involve viewers in the co-construction of artistic meaning. Ma (2022) points out that active audience feedback is reshaping the trajectory of artistic communication, shifting from one-way broadcasting to participatory co-creation. For traditional Chinese instrumental music, which relies heavily on ritual and aesthetic resonance, this transition poses both challenges and opportunities.

Finally, sustainability has emerged as a crucial dimension in online concert research. Fan et al. (2021), employing life cycle assessment, compared the carbon emissions and economic returns of online and offline concerts by the pop group TFBOYS. They found that online performances offer clear advantages in terms of per capita resource consumption and income structure. This provides empirical support for the development of low-cost, high-impact, and environmentally friendly operational models for traditional instrumental music. Similarly, Afifah et al. (2022) emphasize that digital platforms are not merely technological tools but also key nodes in reconfiguring cultural product distribution, advocating for the construction of sustainable online performance ecosystems.

In summary, current literature provides a multi-dimensional foundation for the study of online concerts, covering performance structure, cultural dissemination, platform strategies, audience behavior, and sustainability. However, most existing research focuses on large institutions or popular music projects. Systematic analysis specifically addressing the online performance of traditional Chinese instrumental music—particularly in terms of content planning, platform adaptation, and cultural expression—remains relatively underdeveloped. This paper builds upon the existing body of work by integrating case studies with communication theory to explore the structural transformation, audience engagement, and cultural value of traditional Chinese instrumental music concerts in the post-pandemic digital context, aiming to fill this academic gap and respond to real-world demands.

3. Research Methods and Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology to explore the evolving business models and cultural implications of online traditional Chinese instrumental concerts in the post-pandemic era. Qualitative methods are particularly suitable for understanding complex cultural phenomena, allowing the researcher to interpret the meanings, contexts, and subjective experiences surrounding digital music performance. By focusing on case studies and document analysis, the study seeks to uncover the nuanced relationships between media technology, cultural identity, and performance practices.

3.1 Case Study

This study selects several representative online concert projects featuring traditional Chinese instrumental music from 2020 to 2024 as the primary objects of analysis. These include the National Centre for the Performing Arts' "Voice of Summer" series, the multi-platform performances by the Suzhou Chinese Orchestra, the thematic concert "Red Elegance of Chinese Music," and the global collaborative event "Music One World." These cases represent diverse organizational actors—including national institutions, regional orchestras, and independent musicians—operating across various platforms such as Bilibili, Douyin, Yangshipin, and YouTube. Through examining their content planning, platform strategies, technological application, and audience response, this study investigates their operational characteristics and cultural significance.

3.1.2 Document Analysis

This research draws on a wide range of Chinese and international theoretical literature concerning online concerts, cultural transmission, media convergence, audience behavior, and the digital development of traditional music. Key references include DeVereaux (2019) on discourses of cultural management, Onderdijk et al. (2023) on immersive experience in virtual performances, and Timothy Rice (2014, 2022) on the ethnomusicological relationship between music and identity. In terms of Chinese-language scholarship, the study refers to the analytical findings of Ma (2022), Yang (2023), and Shi (2022) on the practice of online concerts in China.

3.2 Theoretical Framework
3.2.1 Media Ecology Theory

Originally developed by scholars such as Neil Postman and Marshall McLuhan, media ecology theory posits that media serve as environments that shape cultural growth. Media are not merely neutral tools of transmission but foundational structures that influence social order, cognitive modes, and value systems (Postman, 2000). This theory focuses on the impact of communication technologies on cultural systems and social structures. In this study, media ecology is used to analyze how digital platforms reshape the dissemination paths and audience relations of traditional instrumental concerts. In particular, the logic of digital environments redefines performance structures, perceptual mechanisms, and cultural cognition. As Postman argued, changes in the media environment "reconstruct the cultural character of humanity," a shift that brings not only sensory transformation but also deep socio-cultural implications.

3.2.2 Musical Identity Theory

Timothy Rice (2014) emphasizes that music is a "social practice in context," where individuals negotiate and renew their cultural affiliation and self-identity through musical activity. Based on Rice's ethnomusicological research, this study views music as a social process through which identity is constructed and cultural belonging is expressed. Online concerts, as interactive and multi-channel digital platforms, serve as important sites for the generation and

reproduction of cultural identity. Rice's dynamic model of identity construction through music provides a theoretical foundation for analyzing how audiences express and engage with traditional culture via bullet comments, interactive feedback, and online participation.

3.2.3 Theoretical Framework Diagram

Theoretical Framework: Online Chinese Traditional Instrument Concerts
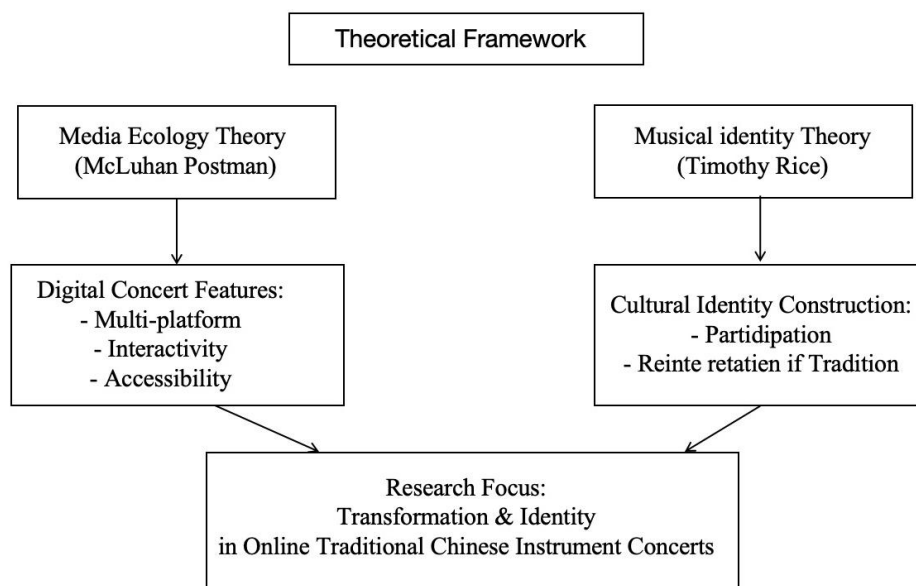

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework: Online Traditional Chinese Instrument Concerts

Figure 1 presents the theoretical framework of this study, based on two main foundations: media ecology theory and musical identity theory. Media ecology emphasizes the environmental nature of technological media and their profound influence on cultural dissemination. In this context, the theory explains how digital platforms—via live streaming, bullet chats, and short-form video—have reshaped the organizational mechanisms, dissemination paths, and audience access methods of traditional instrumental concerts, enabling performances once reliant on live atmosphere to be reconstructed in virtual spaces. Timothy Rice's musical identity theory provides an understanding of how audience participation constructs cultural belonging. It posits that music carries cultural memory and social practice, functioning as a dynamic mechanism for negotiating individual and collective identities. In the context of online concerts, audiences actively participate in the reproduction of traditional culture by selecting content, posting comments, sharing emotions, and engaging in discussion, allowing "tradition" to be reinterpreted and recognized within digital environments.

Together, these two theories form the analytical logic of this research: media technology provides the infrastructure for performance and dissemination, while audience engagement transforms it into a process of cultural identity construction. This framework supports a deeper understanding of the full trajectory of transformation in traditional instrumental performances in the post-pandemic era—from dissemination mechanisms to identity formation—and lays a theoretical foundation for analyzing their future development potential and social function.

3.3 Research Limitations and Ethical Considerations

All performance content referenced in this study was publicly broadcast and does not involve any private audience data, ensuring compliance with fundamental ethical standards of academic research. Although this study attempts to include diverse performance organizations and platforms, internal operational data and user profiles from some livestream platforms (e.g., Douyin, WeChat Video Channel) remain inaccessible. Therefore, the analysis primarily relies on publicly available information and performance recordings. Additionally, large-scale surveys or in-depth interviews were not conducted; future research could incorporate audience data and platform perspectives for more comprehensive empirical validation.

4. Findings

4.1 Characteristics of Online Traditional Chinese Instrument Concerts

Driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, the performance format of traditional Chinese instrumental music has undergone a profound transformation. Conventional concerts emphasize presence and ritual, relying heavily on the integration of performers, audiences, and live settings, with complex organizational processes including venue management, ticket sales, live services, and backstage support. Online concerts, by contrast, break through spatial and temporal limitations, adopting formats such as live streaming, recorded playback, and real-time interaction. These not only enhance viewing convenience and audience engagement but also raise the bar for technical execution and content planning.

What began as a temporary response has evolved into a relatively mature mode of dissemination. Compared to traditional theater-based performances, online concerts are more flexible, cost-effective, and far-reaching. Audiences are no longer bound by venue and time constraints and can enjoy performances via electronic devices. This shift has broadened the audience base, dissolved cultural barriers across regions and social strata, and created new opportunities for disseminating traditional instrumental music.

For example, the Suzhou Chinese Orchestra has operated across platforms such as Bilibili, Douyin, and YouTube, tailoring content strategies based on user demographics to significantly enhance audience retention and participation (Yang, 2023). Similarly, the National Centre for the Performing Arts launched its high-quality "Voice of Summer*声如夏花*" online concert series, offering multilingual subtitles, 4K resolution, and interactive live functions to build a prestigious cultural brand (Shi, 2022). During the 2020 pandemic, the "Music One World" concert demonstrated the global reach of online performances, featuring more than 100 musicians from over ten countries in a 12-hour continuous performance—breaking time and space barriers and becoming a landmark global cultural event (Hua, 2020). That same year, the NCPA presented the "Tribute to the Heroes in Harm's Way*致敬最美逆行者*" concert, merging online and offline broadcasts to convey humanistic care and foster civic solidarity (Su, 2020). More recently, the China National Traditional Orchestra (CNTO) continued this tradition with "Red Elegance of Chinese Music*红妆国乐*", an online concert live-streamed annually on International Women's Day to celebrate female beauty, wisdom, and strength.

Figure 2: China National Traditional Orchestra. (2025). "Tai Yang Song" – Hong Zhuang Guo Yue Live Stream Replay. Bilibili. https://www.bilibili.com/video/BV1kyRsYHEJx

Beyond large-scale institutions, local groups and individual musicians have also actively participated. On platforms like Douyin, many utilize low-cost live streaming to build niche audiences. Some traditional music educators or training institutions use online concerts as promotional tools for recruiting students, transforming these digital performances into an "instant showcase and enrollment" mechanism. This lightweight model lowers the marketing threshold and offers viable operational paths for small to medium-sized groups and independent performers.

Figure 3: Anonymous TikTok User. (2025). Guzheng Concert Live Stream. TikTok.

Despite the advantages of online performances in communication and social function, they still face challenges regarding long-term sustainability. Yi et al. (2021) argue that online concerts offer environmental and technological benefits but lack clear monetization strategies. Most events remain nonprofit and lack mature commercial models. Future development will require exploring sponsorship, paid streaming, and derivative content to establish a virtuous cycle of cultural and economic value.

4.2 Transformation of Performance Mechanisms and Dissemination Paths

Traditional concerts follow structured protocols and emphasize live ritualistic engagement (Jiang & Lü, 2016). However, online platforms have reshaped this paradigm. Performers are no longer confined to physical venues, and audiences have shifted from passive observers to active participants. The "Music One World" event exemplifies this change: by enabling musicians from around the globe to perform synchronously, it created a decentralized and cross-cultural "shared stage," expanding the temporal and spatial dimensions of music communication (Huaxia, 2020).

Online performances now incorporate diverse formats—live streaming, replays, video clips, and immersive VR experiences—to satisfy varied audience preferences. Interactive features such as bullet chats, comments, and live polls transform audience members into co-creators, enhancing engagement and a sense of belonging. In the NCPA and CCTV's "Voice of Summer" series (Figure 3), techniques like personal storytelling, commemorative themes, and real-time interaction helped build an immersive viewing experience that reinvigorated traditional music through digital storytelling (Su, 2020). These shifts compel performance institutions to adapt content planning and branding to a more networked, platform-driven logic.

Figure 4: Chinese National Centre. (2025). "Chang·An" – "Voice of Summer" Series. CCTV.

4.3 Cultural Identity and New Forms of Audience Participation

The digital dissemination of traditional Chinese instrumental music represents not just a formal update but a reconfiguration of cultural identity. Online platforms offer audiences more freedom and agency, shifting reception from passive listening to emotional connection and value resonance. In the centennial tribute concert to Isaac Stern, the program combined music from various regions and styles to foster intercultural dialogue and empathetic resonance (Lai, 2020). Events like "Music One World," "Red Elegance of Chinese Music," and "Voice of

Summer" also engage with contemporary themes through musical narratives, reinforcing cultural identity, societal cohesion, and public sentiment.

At the same time, audience roles are undergoing transformation. They are no longer "silent observers" as in traditional theaters, but active contributors via bullet chats, comments, shares, and votes—forming a user-centered "digital cultural community." This transition from unidirectional to multidirectional interaction recasts concerts as vehicles for identity expression and social bonding, enabling traditional music to enter popular cultural discourse.

Compared to in-person concerts, online performances empower audiences with greater agency. Rather than following fixed schedules and formal settings, audiences can choose when and where to watch and interact. This flexibility fosters a "viewing-feedback-reengagement" cycle, enhancing enthusiasm and opening new avenues for cultural identification. Online audiences also tend to be more diverse, spanning various age groups, regions, and cultural backgrounds, allowing traditional music to resonate across a broader context.

From an ethnomusicological perspective, this process can be viewed as a form of "performative self-construction." Timothy Rice (2014) contends that music is "a process of identity-making shaped by social practice, historical memory, and cultural experience." Online concerts serve as multilayered cultural platforms where audiences continually shape their understanding of "tradition" by selecting content, joining discussions, and expressing views. Specifically, the display of traditional repertoire, instrumental skills, and cultural context helps deepen understanding of what constitutes tradition. When audiences affirm a piece's aesthetic value through bullet chats or share learning experiences in comment sections, they not only express emotion but participate in reconstructing a living tradition.

As Rice (2014) emphasizes, identity formation through music emerges from the interplay of collective memory and participatory practices. Online platforms, through repeated presentation, discussion, and emotional resonance, contribute to a shared cultural imagination of tradition. Furthermore, the international reach of online concerts adds layers of meaning to cultural identity. Multilingual subtitles and guided commentary help non-Chinese audiences grasp the background and emotional depth of each piece, promoting intercultural understanding and extending traditional music's global relevance.

In conclusion, online concerts in the post-pandemic era have not only expanded performance mechanisms and dissemination paths but also injected new vitality and meaning into traditional Chinese instrumental music. They have enhanced the breadth and depth of artistic communication and played an irreplaceable role in emotional expression, cultural identity formation, and the construction of public values.

5. Discussion

5.1 Limitations and Challenges of Online Traditional Chinese Instrument Concerts
In the post-pandemic era, online concerts have shifted from a passive substitute to an active cultural communication channel. Their strengths include broad audience reach, rapid dissemination, diverse interaction formats, and relatively low operational costs. The continuous advancement of technologies such as VR, AR, and virtual performance spaces has further enhanced the immersive and interactive qualities of online concerts, attracting younger audiences and expanding the reach of musical arts. In addition, the public service value of online concerts remains important. Many institutions continue to offer free performances to

fulfill cultural missions, spread positive social values, and strengthen social cohesion. For instance, the National Centre for the Performing Arts has hosted themed online concerts during major holidays, enriching public cultural life.

Despite the achievements, online traditional Chinese instrumental concerts still face several challenges in achieving long-term development. First is the lack of a robust monetization model. Most online concerts adopt a nonprofit model, which, while beneficial for broadening access, cannot sustain long-term operations. They largely rely on government subsidies or cultural funding and have difficulty forming stable revenue streams (Chen, 2017). Transitioning to a paid model could reduce viewership and increase the risk of piracy and unauthorized distribution, undermining potential returns. Second, the technical threshold remains high. High-quality audio-visual production, editing, network transmission, and multi-device compatibility require professional teams and reliable funding. Some online concerts still face issues such as video-audio desynchronization, lag, low resolution, and lack of multi-camera setups, all of which affect the viewing experience. Compared to the refined sensory environment and immersive atmosphere of offline concerts, the expressive power of online performances still has room for improvement. Another point is, content homogeneity across platforms is a serious issue. Many online traditional music performances still replicate the programming and structure of offline concerts, without tailoring content to digital audiences or designing for interactive consumption. The lack of thematic innovation, limited performance formats, and weak viewer engagement make these concerts less appealing in short-video-driven environments.

5.2 Improvement Strategies and Development Recommendations

To enhance the impact and sustainability of online traditional Chinese instrumental concerts, several strategies are recommended. First, develop diversified business models. While maintaining the cultural mission, hybrid revenue mechanisms such as "paid + free preview," "sponsorship + promotion," and "content + merchandise" can be explored. Supplementary content like behind-the-scenes footage, artist interviews, and short-form video edits can help extend user engagement and increase platform retention and brand value. Improve production quality and technological integration is also a important for building a professional and immersive concert environment. Features such as multi-camera switching, HD streaming, and AR/VR technologies should be adopted to elevate the concert experience and provide a theater-like atmosphere. Platform compatibility across devices—including smartphones, tablets, computers, and smart TVs—should also be optimized for accessibility. Lastly, content planning must align with digital media logic. Rather than imitating offline structures, online instrumental concerts should be designed around holidays, cultural themes, or current social events to create focused, dynamic "digital concert programs." Interactive tools like audience polls, comment threads, and bullet chats can be integrated to enhance participation and cultural resonance. Additionally, awareness of copyright protection must be strengthened by building digital registration and tracking systems and collaborating with platforms to combat piracy, ensuring fair compensation for content creators.

5.3 Cultural Significance and Future Value of Online Concerts

Despite technical and operational hurdles, online concerts have already demonstrated unique value as a cultural format. They remove barriers related to geography, scheduling, and physical limitations, and establish "shared cultural spaces" that connect audiences across age groups, regions, and backgrounds. Especially during crises, music functions as both emotional expression and a symbol of cultural identity. Online performances of traditional instrumental music thus enhance social cohesion and serve as vehicles for cultural solidarity and hope.

Public events like "Red Elegance of Chinese Music" and "Voice of Summer" exemplify how music can respond to contemporary issues and sustain emotional well-being.

Therefore, online traditional Chinese instrumental concerts are not just new methods of performance—they represent an expansion of cultural form. Their significance lies not only in technological upgrade and potential commercial value, but also in reconnecting traditional art with contemporary society, injecting new life into Chinese heritage. Looking forward, online and offline concerts should evolve toward mutual complementarity. Digital concerts can increase accessibility and reach, while offline performances retain immersive artistry and social intimacy. This hybrid model promises to innovate and extend artistic practice.

Ultimately, the evolution of online concerts represents a redefinition of performance formats, public cultural service, cultural identity, and artistic communication. Their potential will continue to unfold within broader social and global contexts, driving traditional Chinese instrumental music into contemporary life and the international stage. For online concerts to become a lasting model rather than a pandemic-era contingency, it is essential to understand the specific characteristics of both online and in-person formats, maximize their respective strengths, and pursue modernization and professionalization in concert management.

6. Conclusion

In the post-pandemic era, online traditional Chinese instrumental concerts have emerged not as a temporary fix but as a transformative force in the performance ecology. These concerts have redefined the spatial boundaries of music presentation, reshaped audience engagement pathways, and demonstrated cultural value in areas such as public service, civic participation, and social connection. As online and offline formats gradually converge, they are forming a complementary and mutually reinforcing dissemination model. Online concerts, empowered by technology and platforms, enhance accessibility and reach, while offline concerts maintain artistic depth and community immersion.

Moving forward, the relationship between the two should shift from substitution to integration, with collaborative strategies fostering innovation and expansion. Against the backdrop of cultural digitization, online concerts embody more than a technological transition; they represent an expansion of public cultural service, a reconfiguration of cultural identity, and a redefinition of artistic dissemination. The communicative potential and cultural significance embedded in these digital performances will continue to evolve and serve as powerful drivers for bringing traditional Chinese instrumental music into the present—and into the world.

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