

Romanticism in Pop Music Case Study of The Song 'Birds of A Feather' By Billie Eilish

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the impact and appearance of elements of Romanticism in contemporary pop music through an analysis of the song "Birds of a Feather" by Billie Eilish. By exploring the lyrics, melody, and atmosphere of the song, this research shows how central themes of Romanticism such as an emphasis on deep emotion, connection with nature, idealism, and individualism are visible in Eilish's work. This research provides a new perspective on how the aesthetic legacy of Romanticism still resonates and thrives in the modern pop music industry. I hope that this study will increase the understanding of how the influence of the Romanticism movement in the 19th century still exists and transforms in today's forms of artistic expression.

Keywords: Romanticism, Pop Music, Billie Eilish, Lyric Analysis.

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INTRODUCTION

Romanticism, as a school of thought and art that emphasizes feelings, individual uniqueness, and beauty, has made a significant impact in various creative mediums. Although often associated with the 18th and 19th centuries, the essence of Romanticism continues to resonate and thrive in today's culture. In today's pop music, where personal stories and emotional expressions are an important part of its appeal, the presence of Romanticism can be found in various ways. It is an interesting phenomenon to scrutinize, especially when dealing with works that can reflect the complexity of human emotions in a deep and personal way. Pop songs often represent a collective sense of longing for genuine relationships and deep experiences, a sense of longing that is in line with the spirit of Romanticism.

Background

In the midst of a busy pop music industry filled with massive productions and scripted portrayals, Billie Eilish has emerged as one of the standout artists with a different creative approach. Her simple music, soft vocals, and honest and often dark lyrics have garnered attention around the world. One work that shows the depth of her emotions is the song "Birds of a Feather". This song, with its lyrics depicting longing and haunting melody, naturally feels like it contains elements reminiscent of Romantic ideals. However, to date, there has been no in-depth analysis that specifically addresses how these elements of Romanticism are reflected and interpreted in a modern pop context through the song. This research is crucial to understanding how classical genres can be transformed and remain relevant in today's media, and how pop songs can be a means to explore deep emotions and human connection.

Purpose

This research aims to analyze the song "Birds of a Feather" by Billie Eilish as a case study to identify and discuss aspects of Romanticism contained within it. By analyzing the lyrics and musical elements of this song, this research will explore how themes such as deep feelings, individuality in the experience of love, idealization of relationships, and strong expression emerge in the context of modern pop music.

Theory

To understand this phenomenon, this study will utilize the theoretical framework of Romanticism as a school of art and thought. Some of the key concepts from Romanticism that will form the basis of the analysis include:

1. Focus on Emotion and Intuition: Emphasizes the importance of feelings and personal experience compared to logic.
2. Individualism and Subjectivity: Celebrating individual differences and personal viewpoints.
3. Idealization of Nature and Love: Appreciates the beauty of nature as well as a view of deep or lasting love.
4. Melancholy and the Sublime: Recognize the dark side of human emotions as well as experiences that evoke a sense of awe or exalted fear.
5. Supernatural or Transcendent Elements: An interest in things that transcend the limits of physical reality. By understanding these characteristics of Romanticism, we can systematically locate and interpret the presence of these elements in the song "Birds of a Feather", through its lyrics and musical composition.

The results of this study are expected to provide several important contributions:

Contribution of Research Results

1. Theoretical Contribution: Adding insight to the literature on Romanticism by offering concrete examples of how this traditional concept remains relevant and visible in modern art forms, especially in the field of pop music. This will show how Romanticism theory can adapt and remain acceptable over time.
2. Methodological Contribution: Provides an in-depth analysis through an interpretative qualitative case study of pop songs, which can serve as a reference for future similar research in music or popular culture studies.
3. Practical Contribution: Provides deeper insights for music lovers, critics, and musicians into the layers of emotional meaning contained in pop songs. This research also has the potential to spark further investigation into the connections between classical art genres and contemporary artistic expressions.
4. Critical Contribution: Invites a deeper discussion on the function of pop music as a medium to convey human psychological and emotional complexity in the digital age, which is often considered light or superficial.

RESEARCH METHODS

In order to understand the Romanticism contained in the song “Birds of a Feather” by Billie Eilish, we will apply the Interpretative Qualitative Research Method with a Case Study approach. The purpose of this research is to investigate the subjective meanings and emotional experiences present in the song, rather than simply explaining the elements in isolation.

Research Approach and Design

The qualitative, interpretive approach allows us not only to recognize the elements of Romanticism, but also to understand how lyrics and music collaborate to create a Romantic atmosphere, and why this is important to today's listeners. We will explore the ways in which the artistic choices made by Billie Eilish and Finneas create a deep and affecting emotional experience.

The use of a case study design is appropriate as it provides the opportunity to conduct an in-depth analysis of one specific unit, the song “Birds of a Feather”. With this clear focus, we can gain a thorough understanding of how Romanticism can be seen in every element of the song - from lyrics to music - and relate it to the broader context of Billie Eilish's art style and the development of modern pop music. The ultimate goal is to gain a deep understanding, not just expand discovery.

Data Source

The main sources of information in this study are the lyrics of the song “Birds of a Feather” which serves as the main text data, as well as the audio of the song “Birds of a Feather” which includes melody, harmony, arrangement, and vocals by Billie Eilish. The combination of these two sources is very important to understand the relationship between lyrical content and musical expression in forming a complete Romantic meaning.

Data Analysis

The data examination process will involve a close reading of the lyrics to discover Romantic themes such as deep love, strong emotions, or transcendent relationships. At the same time, we will conduct a musical analysis of the audio to understand how the flowing melodies, close harmonies, simple yet atmospheric arrangements, and Billie Eilish's soft vocals together emphasize these Romantic messages. Interpretation will focus on how all these elements combine to evoke feelings and experiences unique to Romanticism, while reflecting them in the context of today's pop.

RESULT AND DISCUSION

Lyrics

The text of *Birds of a Feather*, a song by Billy Eilish, comes from his contemporary brand of style, but it definitely reflects some elements of romance.

- Romanticism glorifies emotion over rationality, and this song is an intense outpouring of feelings. Texts like "I don't know what I'm cryin' for/I don't think I could love you more" show emotional depth beyond logic. "And if I'm turnin' blue, please don't save me / Nothin' left to lose without my baby." To the extreme, there is a perfect devotion to such great love. This is a feature of romance that provides intuition And emotions in front of me.
- The most prominent element of Romanticism is the extreme idealization of love and the desire for forever. "I want you to stay 'Til I'm in the grave / 'Til I rot away, dead and buried / 'Til I'm in the casket you carry". "I'll love you 'til the day that I die / 'Til the light leaves my eyes" is a form of love that is not bound by time limits. The expression "birds of a feather, we need to hold together" itself shows a perfect and inseparable relationship.

Melody

- Simple yet Memorable: The vocal melody in this song tends to be simple, with few drastic note jumps. This simplicity makes it more memorable, and has a personal effect as if Billy is directly whispering his feelings to the listener. Romance often emphasizes pure, unadulterated beauty.
- Flowing and Lyrical: The melody feels flowing, with long, unbroken phrases, creating the impression of a continuous narrative. This supports the deep and sustained emotional narrative typical of romantic expressions.
- Repetition of Melodic Motifs: The repetition of melodic motifs, especially in the chorus, reinforces the emotional message and makes it feel more intense and hypnotic, as if the emotion is constantly spinning in the mind.

Harmony

- Intimate and Haunting Chord Progression: The harmonies in this song often use "somber" or minor chords, even in the context of major tones. This creates a melancholic and introspective mood that is perfect for the dark and poetic aspects of romance.

- Use of Sus2/Sus4 or Minor 7th Chords: These kinds of chords often give a beautiful sense of tension or uncertainty, or a soft, dreamy atmosphere. It creates a rich emotional palette that expresses song, longing, intimacy, and vulnerability.
- Soft Resolutions: Chord resolutions are often soft and not "firm," leaving a slight sense of melancholy or romantic uncertainty, rather than a contented resolution.

Arrangement

- Minimalist and Intimate: The arrangement of this song is very minimalistic, especially in the beginning. The main focus is given to Billie's vocals and the acoustic guitar or piano dominates. This "sparse" configuration creates a large space for emotions to express, making the listener feel as if they are the only witness to the outpouring of feelings. It is very romantic in its sense of intimacy and focuses on the individual experience.
- Gradual Buildup of Dynamics: Although minimalistic, there is a gradual build-up of dynamics towards the chorus and bridge. The added instruments like synthetic strings and slow bass build emotional power without being "full" or "heavy." Emotional peaks are achieved by adding textures rather than solid explosions, as the introspective feel is maintained.
- Use of Atmospheric Textures: Extensive use of synthetic pads or reverb creates a vast and "dreamy" sound space, giving a transcendent and imaginative feel often associated with Romanticism. This creates the perfect backdrop for texts of eternal love and connections from "another life."

Billie Eilish Vocals

- Whisper Vocal: This is one of Billie Eilish's most powerful trademarks. Whisper vocals quickly create extreme intimacy. It's as if she's whispering her secrets and feelings directly into the audience's ears. This intimacy is very romantic as it creates a deep emotional connection between the artist and the audience.
- Vulnerability and Honest Emotions: Billie Eilish does not hide fragility or sadness in her vocals. There is a very honest vibe, breathing, and emotional expression that makes the listener feel every word. Romanticism is thankful for uninvited authentic emotional expression
- Use of Low Octaves: Her vocals often being in the low octaves gives it a "heavy" and melancholic feel, which suits themes of sadness, longing, or the dark depths of love
- Vocal Dynamics Control: Although often whispering, Billie demonstrates exceptional control of dynamics, able to accentuate certain words or key phrases with slight changes in volume or intonation, which amplifies the emotional impact of her lyrics.

The romantic significance of the song "The Federation of Birds" can be interpreted in a contemporary pop context, reflecting the basic human need for deposit and intensive emotional connection through social media.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that Billy Eilish's song "Birds of A Feather" highlights the traces of romance and shows how these classical genres relate and manifest in modern pop music. The most important findings show that the song is a powerful and highly personal emotional explanation, and is deeply rooted in its romantic values.

For the sake of the text, the song directly expresses such fraught and sometimes irrational feelings: B. Detailed love for the limits of obsession and eternal longing. The use of Onko in Imagination of Death and "Another Life" clearly shows the characteristics of romance, the idealization of transcendent and eternal love after a relationship other than the boundaries of physical ennoblement. The entire story of the song reflects individualism and subjective experience focusing on the emotional journey of the individual.

Musically, the romance is troubled by rhythms and speeds that support expressive, melancholic melodies, intimate harmonies, subtle emotional tensions and introspective atmospheres. Although the minimalism is supported by Billie Eilish's Whisper vocals, the air setting is full of vulnerability, creating a deep and very personal linguistic realm. All of this contributes to an immersive and romantic experience where listeners are invited to feel all their emotions.

The impact of these findings on understanding the influence of romance on contemporary pop music is significant. It shows the development of form and style, but the emphasis on the nature of romance - the idealization of deep emotions, individual uniqueness, and intensive connection - is still relevant and very much in the modern audience. Pop music, often called flat, is a powerful medium that expresses human psychological and emotional complexity to fulfill credibility and longing for deeper connections in the digital age.

For further research, it would be interesting to compare the traces of romanticism in "Birds of a Feather" with other songs by Billie Eilish that could show similar topics, or other contemporary pop artists. Such a comparative analysis could provide a broader understanding of how romance adapts and evolves to various contemporary musical landscapes.

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