

Zhou Tie

**Interaction with Traditional Chinese music in
a Portfolio of Original Compositions**

Cardiff University School of Music

2023

Abstract

This thesis concerns the influences of traditional Chinese music and Chinese ethnic minority music, including the pentatonic scale, the timbre of traditional instruments, and the introduction of the concept of percussion in traditional opera as they are reflected in my compositions. The portfolio of compositions includes works for soloists, duets, solo instruments with electronics, chamber opera, chamber music, large-scale orchestral music, Chinese and Western mixed chamber music, and choral music demonstrating a process of stylistic formation through a large variety of compositional genres.

The commentary discusses the sources of different musical materials, reflecting on and describing the compositional process and the different directions my music composition has taken over the course of my doctoral studies. After first presenting my compositional outlook and theoretical background, several of the compositions are discussed in detail. The incorporation of Chinese minority music sources, such as the techniques of Mongolian vocals and traditional Tibetan instruments, is also described. Additionally, there is a reflection on compositional techniques such as harmony, timbre and orchestration, which are influenced by ideas of oriental colour and contemporary music of Europe. Lastly, the process of finding a new compositional language that is appropriate to the times and new cultural contexts is explored in the conclusion.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	I
List of Portfolio Compositions	II
List of Figures	III
List of Tables	IV
List of Music examples.....	V
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1 The Impression of Peking Opera.....	3
Chapter 2 Samsara	11
Chapter 3 Sail to the South	22
Chapter 4 Snow River.....	29
Chapter 5 Snow Country.....	36
Chapter 6 The Birth of the Modern Composer	54
Chapter 7 The Other Pieces	65
Conclusion	67
Bibliography	68

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Arlene Sierra for her generous guidance and encouragement throughout my research, Dr. Pedro Faria Gomes, and Dr. Jerry Zhuo, who kindly helped and gave up his time to look over this commentary.

I am very grateful to Cardiff University School of Music for giving me an opportunity to continue developing my music career and for believing in me as a composer. The wealth of experiences during my period of study has been extensive, from various performance opportunities, workshops, different kinds of seminars and lectures, and concerts (many featuring twentieth and twenty-first-century music), to being part of a lively and vibrant postgraduate community, all of which I have greatly valued.

Finally, and most importantly, thank you to my wonderful parents. With their support and acceptance in this, I have become a real composer now. My success is inseparable from them. Thank you to everyone who has helped me on my journey to success.

Tie Zhou
Cardiff, 2023

List of Portfolio Compositions: Approximately 120 minutes in total

1 The Impression of Peking Opera 京韵 2018-2019	Soprano saxophone with piano	6 minutes (live recording)
2 Samsara 轮回 2018-2020	Alto saxophone/Soprano saxophone and pre-recorded track	9 minutes (live recording)
3 Sail to the South 向南远去的风帆 2018-2019	Chinese instrument ensemble	8'45" (live recording)
4 Snow River 江雪 2018-2020	Mixed choir	6 minutes (no recording)
5 Snow Country 雪国 2019-2020	Orchestra	8 minutes (live recording)
6 My Love-Five ink painting memory of Northern 韵-北国的五幅水墨 2018-2020	Piano solo	12 minutes (live recording)
7 Alone Sail, Alone Shadow 孤帆远影 2019-2020	Mixed ensemble	8 minutes (live recording)
8 The Forgotten Strings 被遗忘的弦诗 2020-2021	Five-string pipa solo	8 minutes (no recording)
9 Totem 图腾 2020-2021	Orchestra	8 minutes (no recording)
10 The Penoy Pavilion-soul Leaving 牡丹亭离魂 2020-2021	Alto saxophone with accordion	6 minutes (live recording)
11 The Birth of the Modern Composer 一个现代作曲家的诞生 2019-2020	Chamber opera	20 minutes (no recording)
12 Goodbye South, Goodbye 再见南国，再见 2020-2021	Pipa trio	10 minutes (live recording)

List of Figures

Figure 1 Guqin	15
Figure 2 Pipa	16
Figure 3 Snow river poem	29
Figure 4 Snow river poem translation	26
Figure 5 Chin	40
Figure 6 Tibetan bowl	40

List of Tables

Table 1 The sound of track	13
Table 2 Sail to the south structure	23
Table 3 The content of scene	54

List of Music Examples

Example 1.1 <i>The Impression of Peking Opera</i> , motivation of ‘zhi’ percussive, bar 2.....	4
Example 1.2 <i>The Impression of Peking Opera</i> , motivation of ‘zhi’ pentatonic scale, bar1	5
Example 1.3 <i>The Impression of Peking Opera</i> , harmony, bar 1.....	5
Example 1.4 <i>The Impression of Peking Opera</i> , motifs of bangu and xiaobo, bar 2.....	6
Example 1.5 <i>The Impression of Peking Opera</i> , motifs of bangu and xiaobo, bar 38.....	7
Example 1.6 <i>The Impression of Peking Opera</i> , call and response between saxophone and piano, bar 22..	7
Example 1.7 <i>The Impression or Peking Opera</i> , the syncopation of piano, bar 156.....	8
Example 1.8 <i>The Impression or Peking Opera</i> , melody from ‘ <i>The deep night</i> ’, bar 32.....	8
Example 1.9 <i>The Impression or Peking Opera</i> , five-note imitation in different core pitch group, bar 8...9	9
Example 1.10 <i>The Impression or Peking Opera</i> , pentatonic melody with cluster and drum effect, bar 5.....	10
Example 1.11 <i>The Impression or Peking Opera</i> , the imagination of jinghu with percussive effect, bar 73.....	10
Example 2.1 <i>Samsara</i> , saxophone solo, bar 9	14
Example 2.2 <i>Samsara</i> , saxophone solo, bar 12.....	14
Example 2.3 <i>Samsara</i> , saxophone solo, bar 111.....	14
Example 2.4 <i>Samsara</i> , soprano saxophone solo, bar 133.....	15
Example 2.5 <i>Samsara</i> , guqin solo, bar 7.....	16
Example 2.6 <i>Samsara</i> , pipa solo, bar 88.....	17
Example 2.7 <i>Samsara</i> , saxophone solo, bar 98.....	17
Example 2.8 <i>Samsara</i> , xiaoluo solo, bar 9.....	18
Example 2.9 <i>Samsara</i> , female voice, bar 16.....	18
Example 2.10 <i>Samsara</i> , male voice, bar 58.....	18
Example 2.11 <i>Samsara</i> , male voice, bar 121.....	18
Example 2.12 <i>Samsara</i> , female voice, bar 135.....	19
Example 2.13 <i>Samsara</i> , overtone singing, bar 132.....	19
Example 2.14 <i>Samsara</i> , rainy sound, bar 9.....	19
Example 2.15 <i>Samsara</i> , bird sound, bar 80.	19
Example 2.16 <i>Samsara</i> , rainy sound with wind sound, bar 107.....	20
Example 2.17 <i>Samsara</i> , wind sound and warning sound, bar 49.....	20
Example 2.18 <i>Samsara</i> , synthesizer, bar 1.....	20
Example 3.1 <i>Sail to the South</i> , erhu solo, bar 142.....	24
Example 3.2 <i>Sail to the South</i> , qudi solo, bar 144.....	24
Example 3.3 <i>Sail to the South</i> , pipa solo, bar 142.....	25
Example 3.4 <i>Sail to the South</i> , sheng, bar 108.....	25
Example 3.5 <i>Sail to the South</i> , sheng, harmony analysis, bar 108.....	26
Example 3.6 <i>Sail to the South</i> , daruan extended technique, bar 31.....	26

Example 3.7 <i>Sail to the South</i> , xiaogu, bar 45.....	27
Example 3.8 <i>Sail to the South</i> , erhu, bar 118.....	27
Example 3.9 <i>Sail to the South</i> , the inspiration of orchestration by bangu, bar 88.....	28
Example 4.1 <i>Snow River</i> , ‘yoo’ bar 1.....	30
Example 4.2 <i>Snow River</i> , ‘wu’, bar 75.....	30
Example 4.3 <i>Snow River</i> , melody, bar 15.....	31
Example 4.4 <i>Snow River</i> , guqin effect, bar 3.....	31
Example 4.5 <i>Snow River</i> , sound like wind, bar 4.....	32
Example 4.6 <i>Snow River</i> , “fisherman’ Song”, bar 48.....	32
Example 4.7 <i>Snow River</i> , harmony, bar 87 to the end.....	33
Example 4.8 <i>Snow River</i> , soprano solo, bar 26.....	33
Example 4.81 <i>Snow River</i> , tenor solo, bar 46.....	33
Example 4.82, <i>Snow River</i> , vocal sound, bar 72.....	34
Example 4.9, <i>Snow River</i> , real and imaginary sound, bar 68.....	35
Example 5.1 <i>Snow Country</i> , strings, bar 7.....	37
Example 5.11 <i>Snow Country</i> , cello, bar 7	37
Example 5.2 <i>Snow Country</i> , strings, bar 1.....	38
Example 5.3 <i>Snow Country</i> , strings, bar 11.....	38
Example 5.4 <i>Snow Country</i> , harmony, bar 37.....	39
Example 5.5 <i>Snow Country</i> , xiaobo, bar 103.....	41
Example 5.6 <i>Snow Country</i> , strings, bar 11.....	42
Example 5.7 <i>Snow Country</i> , strings, bar 11.....	43
Example 5.8 <i>Snow Country</i> , strings, bar 4.....	43
Example 5.9 <i>Snow Country</i> , smorzando, bar 6.....	44
Example 5.10 <i>Snow Country</i> , air sound, bar 24.....	44
Example 5.11 <i>Snow Country</i> , woodwind, brass and percussion, bar 54.....	45
Example 5.12 <i>Snow Country</i> , woodwind and brass, bar 54.....	46
Example 5.13 <i>Snow Country</i> , woodwind, bar 118.....	46
Example 5.14 <i>Snow Country</i> , woodwind, bar 10.....	47
Example 5.15 <i>Snow Country</i> , woodwind, bar 113.....	47
Example 5.16 <i>Snow Country</i> , woodwind, bar 115.....	48
Example 5.17 <i>Snow Country</i> , strings, bar 113.....	48
Example 5.18 <i>Snow Country</i> , scale, bar 113.....	49
Example 5.19 <i>Snow Country</i> , woodwind, bar 10.....	50
Example 5.20 <i>Snow Country</i> , harp, bar 1.....	51
Example 5.21 <i>Snow Country</i> , piano, bar 33.....	51
Example 5.22 <i>Snow Country</i> , timpani, bar 2.....	51
Example 5.23 <i>Snow Country</i> , chord, bar 139.....	52
Example 6.1 <i>The deep night</i> , the methods of melody.....	55
Example 6.2 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , motivation of ‘ <i>The song of harvest</i> ’	56
Example 6.3 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , strings, bar 35.....	56
Example 6.4 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , ‘the ghost name’ bar 158.....	57
Example 6.5 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , improvisation bar 300.....	58
Example 6.6 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , improvisation bar 307.....	59

Example 6.7 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , stomping bar 158.....	60
Example 6.8 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , the protagonist bar 313.....	60
Example 6.9 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , harmony bar 16,18.....	61
Example 7.0 Joyful.....	61
Example 7.1. <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , echoing the relationship between solo and accompaniment bar 75.....	62
Example 7.2 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , monotony texture, bar 18.....	62
Example 7.3 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , monotony texture with complex texture, bar 54.....	63
Example 7.4 <i>The Birth of the Modern Composer</i> , repetition bar 101&110.....	64
Example 8.1 <i>Arirang</i> , the piano part, bars 5.....	65
Example 8.2 <i>The Forgotten Strings</i> , the vocal with pipa solo, bars 153.....	65
Example 8.3 <i>Totem</i> , the melody of violin, bars 108.....	66

Introduction

In my studies I have learned about aspects of notation of Western compositional techniques that are helpful to traditional music. In my view, the mastery of Western contemporary music composition techniques and ideas is a sure way to bring traditional Chinese folk instruments to the world music stage in the future. It is a great opportunity for a contemporary Chinese composer to make traditional Chinese folk instruments shine in a new light. For me, this aspiration has provided a new direction for my music.

To provide a historical context in China, the post-war period saw the production of many outstanding musical works that bore the hallmarks of the Red Era and were written in a similar style to those of Soviet composers, such as the Yellow River Concerto by *Chengzong Yin* and *Wanghua Chu* and Butterfly violin concerto by *Gang Chen* and *Zhanhao He*. From 1966 to 1976, Chinese society underwent the Cultural Revolution, a period of great political and economic change. During the Cultural Revolution, Western music and Western music education were abandoned, and music education in China stagnated. Under the influence of special political factors, Chinese composers looked to the musical elements of Peking Opera for inspiration and created a large number of modern 'Red Peking Operas' that were in line with the political direction, but these works were abandoned by the times with the end of the Cultural Revolution.

China then resumed the college entrance examination system in the end of Cultural revolution and University students were finally given a real opportunity to study. During this period, they studied the rigorous Classical compositional techniques of the West at conservatories and experimented with the incorporation of Chinese musical materials to create contemporary Classical pieces. Later, they studied in Europe, the United States or other countries, and their works gained much attention and influence at China and abroad. The most highly regarded Chinese composers began to blossom in the world of Classical music, including well-known figures such as *Long Zhou* (1953-), *Yi Chen* (1953-), *Xiaogang Ye* (1955-), *Dun Tan* (1957-), *Qigang Chen* (1951-) and many others. Together these figures have made a significant contribution to the world of Classical music by writing works in a distinct Chinese style during the second half of the twentieth century.

In my view, the younger generation of Chinese composers have not yet achieved the influence of the generation of composers after the Cultural Revolution. The fact that

the younger generation of composers has been less able to inherit and develop their own music is a topic that has often been discussed by experts and scholars in recent years¹.

The study of traditional Chinese music is facing challenges in today's rapidly developing Chinese culture. Rapid urbanisation, the decline of the countryside, the migration of the population, the transmission of intangible heritage and a host of other social issues are all largely affecting the existence and significance of traditional and minority music in this era. Compared to the generation of composers after the Cultural Revolution, the problems faced by younger contemporary composers and scholars who are interested in this material are immensely challenging.

The portfolio includes duet, solo instrument (with electronic recording), Western-Chinese mixed chamber music, choral music, large-scale orchestral music, and chamber opera. After first presenting my compositional outlook and theoretical background, several of the compositions are discussed in detail. The influences of 'traditional Chinese music' and 'minority music', such as the pentatonic scale, the timbre of traditional instruments, the combination of traditional instruments and relationship between traditional music and western compositional technique, the notation for traditional instruments, voice writing for the Chinese poem, and the introduction of the concept of percussion in traditional opera are discussed as they are reflected in my composition.

¹ Edward, Davis, 'Encyclopedia of Contemporary Chinese Culture', *Taylor & Francis*, (2004), pp. 135–267

Chapter 1 The impression of Peking Opera

This work represents an earlier period of my composition portfolio, written several years ago and originally scored as a piano solo work. In the first year of my Ph.D. studies at Cardiff University, I modified the original piano work into two different versions. The first is a duet of saxophone and piano, and the second is a duet of erhu and yangqin, which are both traditional Chinese stringed instruments. Both versions have been performed in many countries and music festivals. The work included in the portfolio is the version of the work for saxophone and piano which was finished in my first year of PhD study. This version accurately represents my early attempts at combining my understanding of Chinese national music with a contemporary compositional style. Below I will elaborate on the deep relationship between this work and traditional folk music.

First of all, the overall concept of this work is derived from traditional Chinese Peking Opera². Peking Opera is a form of performance art which combines different traditional Chinese dramatic forms: the four major Hui dramas in Southern China and a variant of opera in the North which emerged during the period of Qianlong emperor's³ rule in the Qing Dynasty (1644–1912)⁴. Elizabeth Halson writes:

Peking opera is a performance art incorporating singing, reciting, acting, martial arts. Although widely practiced throughout China, its performance centers in Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai. Peking opera is sung and recited using primarily Beijing dialect, and its librettos are composed according to a strict set of rules that prize form and rhyme. They tell stories of history, politics, society and daily life and aspire to inform as they entertain. The music of Peking opera plays a key role in setting the pace of the show, creating a particular atmosphere, shaping the characters, and guiding the progress of the stories. 'Civilian plays' emphasize string and wind instruments such as the thin, high-pitched jinghu and the dizi (Chinese flute), while 'military plays' feature percussion instruments like the bangu or daluo. Performance is characterized by a formulaic and symbolic style with actors and actresses following established choreography for movements of hands, eyes, torsos, and feet. Traditionally, stage settings and props are kept to a minimum. Costumes are

² Elizabeth, Halson, 'Peking Opera': *A Short Guide*. Oxford University Press, (1968), pp.54

³ Ke, Wang, 'Between the Ummah and China': *The Qing Dynasty's Rule over Xinjiang Uyghur Society* *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, Kobe University Press, pp.57-87

⁴ Crossley, 'Pamela Kyle Orphan Warriors': *Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World*, Princeton University Press, (1990), pp. 107–253

flamboyant and the exaggerated facial make-up uses concise symbols, colours and patterns to portray characters' personalities and social identities. Peking opera is transmitted largely through master-student training with trainees learning basic skills through oral instruction, observation and imitation. It is regarded as an expression of the aesthetic ideal of opera in traditional Chinese society and remains a widely recognized element of the country's cultural heritage.⁵

There has always existed an enigma to understanding the elements of composition which captures the quintessence of Peking Opera art. For example, why do so many contemporary Chinese composers like to draw inspiration from Peking opera, and is this source of inspiration endless?

Deepening my understanding of Peking Opera, I became more and more curious about how Peking Opera elements can be combined with contemporary music compositional styles, and hence the idea of creating a work through the combination of the two emerged, resulting in 'The Impression of Peking Opera'.

At the beginning of the work, to allow the audience to quickly grasp the core feeling in Peking Opera of musical expression and arresting dramatic effects, I used traditional pentatonic motives and a continuous percussive rhythm found in many Peking operas. The inspiration for this percussive rhythm in the piano comes from the percussive element of band performance in Peking Opera, where the band functions to accompany actors in the story telling.



Example 1.1 *The Impression of Peking Opera*, motif of 'zhi' percussion, bars 2-3

There are five modes that are commonly used in Chinese traditional music, which are all variants Jiao (角), 'Zheng' (徵), 'Yu' (羽):



⁵ Elizabeth, Halson, 'Peking Opera': *A Short Guide*. Oxford University Press, (1968), pp.268



Example 1.2 *The Impression of Peking Opera*, motif of ‘zhi’ pentatonic scale, bar 1

The opening saxophone motif is a complete iteration of the mode of ‘Zhi’. In Chinese traditional music, the ‘Gong’ mode functions similarly to a tonic major key in Western music and it often plays the role of tonal basis of a piece. The other four scales would supplement this tonality by functioning as secondary tonality (in relation to ‘Gong’) in the development of music and offers the musical effect of a dominant seventh or a dominant/leading chord tendency in Western music. The use of ‘Zhi’ pentatonic scale as a solo opening motif can be aurally refreshing in the context of traditional Chinese music. This approach, resembling a common compositional technique in Western music, is a bit similar to the use of a dominant harmony function in an anacrusis in the opening of a piece.

In the beginning of the piece, the two chords of the piano solo are mainly pentatonic decorated by adjacent tones, thus forming two chords with dissonant tension and percussive colour. However, despite the dissonance, the internal pitch connection of the two chords allows a sense of direction to be retained, created by the auditory tendencies of traditional Western harmony in the dominant to tonic relationship. This not only achieves the changes in pitch and harmony but also unites the movement of the voices. Therefore, utilizing a pentatonic construction of harmony, the tone colour of the piano can be better integrated with the opening pentatonic motif of the saxophone.

Example 1.3 *The Impression of Peking Opera*, harmony, bars 1-2

The sense of direction created by the harmonic link between the two chords ensures that the harmonic motif has the same directional movement as the melody. The whole work uses this unified approach of integrating horizontal contour with vertical harmony in many places. I believe this method of harmonic construction can provide some sense of tonal stability while offering freedom to explore extended tonality, taking advantage of the benefits offered by both recent idioms and the harmonic practice of the tonal music era. Many of my other works similarly use this approach, whether it is in solo works *Samsara* or large-scale orchestral *Snow Country*. As many traditional ethnic percussion instruments have no actual pitch, sometimes just a timbre produced by a percussive effect, I started with the aural effects and colors of Peking Opera percussion, imitating the creation of a sense of pitch and harmonic direction, thus trying to expand and extend the tonality.

The persistent single-pitch ostinato simulates the sound image of xiaobo (小钹)⁶ and bangu (板鼓)⁷— both percussive instruments found in the Peking Opera band.

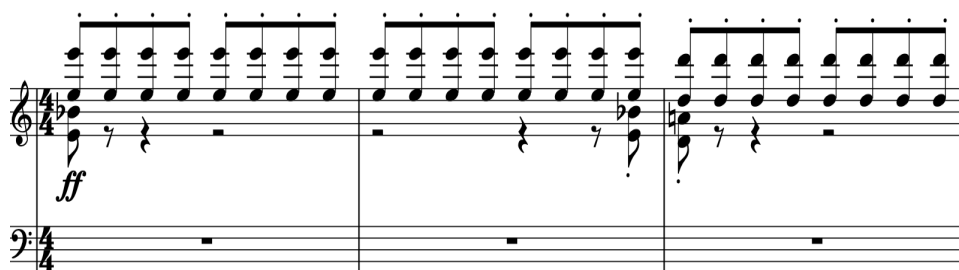
The uninterrupted single-pitch continuity is a vital element of not only Peking Opera percussion. In Peking Opera, bangu and xiaobo played together often serves the function of announcing the entrance and transitions of characters in the story, as well as portraying scenes of war. It provides strong musical support for the effects of the stage, enhancing the storytelling. Without the accompaniment of these two percussive instruments, the richness of storytelling in Peking Opera would be less effective. When I first began writing this work, the first point of inspiration came from the expressive percussion performances of Peking Opera. Being able to create the stunning stage effects with a limited combination of instruments quickly became an important point of exploration in my compositional process. The saxophone single tongue playing technique can aurally represent the persistent rhythm of the plate drum, while the subsequent variants of that decorative motif represent the timbral image of the metal percussion cymbal.



Example 1.4 *The Impression of Peking Opera*, motifs of bangu and xiaobo, bars 2-3

⁶ Garritan, Gary, 'World Instrument Collection', *ARIA Engine*. (2002), pp.105

⁷ Yuan-Yuan Lee, and Sinyan, Shen, 'Chinese Musical Instruments' (Chinese Music Monograph Series), Chinese Music Society of North America Press, (1999), pp.56-143



Example 1.5 *The Impression of Peking Opera*, motifs of bangu and xiaobo, bars 38-40

The second appearance of the Bangu and Xiaobo motif is played by the piano. In this iteration, in addition to the single-pitch continuity, the left hand of the piano is marked with accents to resemble the accents played by a Peking Opera percussion ensemble, where the emphasis on beats is necessary to demonstrate the shock-value of a scene.

The rhythmic relationship between the accompaniment and the solo is an essential feature of this work.



Example 1.6 *The Impression of Peking Opera*, call and response between saxophone and piano, bars 22-25

Here, I have used the call and response technique of relating the two musical components, to resemble a commonly used musical technique in band performances of traditional Chinese music. The call and response technique are not only found often in Chinese Opera, but also in traditional folksong. Specifically, in folk songs denoting love, the call and response technique evokes the image of two lovers exchanging words of love in a duet from different corners of the mountains, achieving an echoing effect.

The percussion elements in traditional Peking Opera are stylistically fixed and very distinct. As a composer, it is important for me to contemplate how to elaborate on this traditional rhythm to derive something new and modern, yet not lose the character of the traditional rhythm.



Example 1.7 *The Impression of Peking Opera*, syncopation of piano, bars 156-157

Syncopated rhythms are applied to the rhythmic motif in the piano. The dissonant sound of the piano chords, spanning across the bass and treble ranges, simulates the percussive effect of a drum. Simulating percussive sounds with dissonance in the piano is an idea that appears many times throughout the work. The repetition of this idea serves to deepen the impact of this concept of timbral transformation in context of the musical development in this work.

The saxophone melody pursues two musical ideas. The first is the use of polytonal characteristics in the theme. The second is the combination of polytonal melodic elements and the traditional pentatonic mode, presenting the pitch material of traditional music in a way that sounds distinctly modern. My hope is that the audience retains the aural image of traditional Chinese music in the shadows of this work, while hearing something that is new.



Example 1.8 *The Impression of Peking Opera*, melody from 'The deep night', bars 32-34

The melody in 1.8 quotes a very famous song from *The Deep Night*, a Peking Opera, forming an ostinato motif for development in this work.

The motif itself is based melodically on a core pitch, beginning with the first iteration where the core pitch is G. The transformation thus occurs with the core pitch shifting upwards in 5ths, resulting in a series where the core pitches transform from G, to D, then to A, and then finally E. After the entrance of the saxophone solos, the melody

in the piano again develops in this way, starting from the bass with a core pitch of B, then rising in core pitch to F and then to C, again resulting in a series constituting a transformation of the original motif.

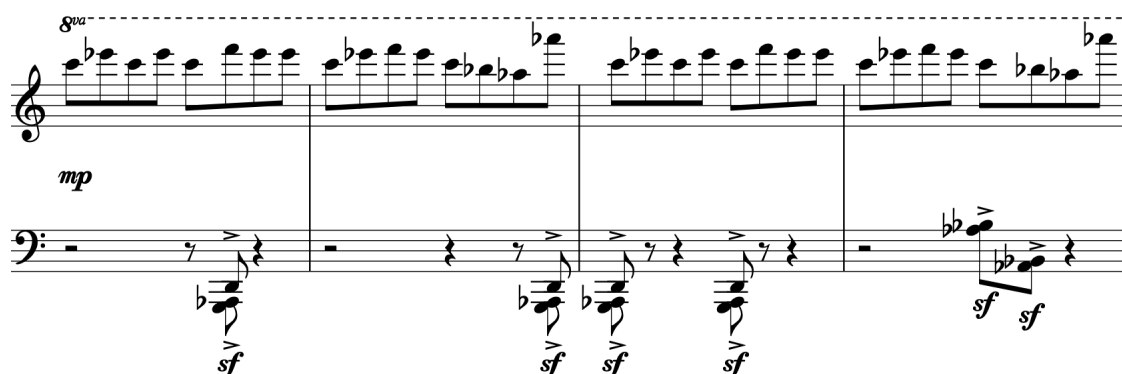
The two transformations of the original melodic motif allow the music to flow freely and omits the feeling for structural break in the music because of the tonal ambiguity. This method of melodic development is rare in traditional Chinese music. In most of the traditional Chinese music, melodic development is relatively simple, and my deployment of motivic transformation to create a compound melodic figure demonstrates the combination of Western compositional techniques with traditional Chinese musical elements. Also, the compound melody undergoes a metric transformation on top of the melodic transformation that occurs on the level of the motif: as shown in figure 1.8, the first appearance of the compound melody is arranged across a 3/4-time signature (in a bar), while the second appearance is arranged across a 4/4-time signature. While the rhythm itself remains the same, by arranging the compound melody across different meters, the effect of the music changes drastically. By using these various techniques of transformation, my intention is to explore distinct ways of thinking about traditional music in the context of modern composition.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system is in 3/4 time. The bass line starts with a low B (B2), then moves to F (F3), and then to C (C4). The melody in the right hand is a pentatonic motif. The second system is in 4/4 time. The bass line starts with a low B (B2), then moves to F (F3), and then to C (C4). The melody in the right hand is a pentatonic motif. The score includes dynamic markings like p, fp, and ff.

Example 1.9 *The Impression of Peking Opera*, pentatonic motif on piano part, bars 8-15

Another challenge I faced in the compositional process of this work was how to successfully translate the development of musical tension from the original combination of instruments in a Peking Opera ensemble to the piano. In Peking Opera, Jinghu is the instrument that often plays the melody, while the drums appear occasionally to give support for the musical atmosphere and to create tension. In figure 1.9, I have attempted to translate this musical effect to the piano, distributing the melody to the right hand of the piano at a higher octave to imitate the sound of the Jinghu, while

using chord clusters in the left hand to imitate the rhythmic jabs of the drums. This timbral translation proved quite successful in creating the intended musical effect. The dissonance in the chord clusters created by the contrast of tone with semitone is a good expression of my imagination of the percussive sound in Peking Opera.



Example 1.10: *The impression of Peking Opera*, pentatonic melody with cluster and drum effect on piano part, bars 54-57

The translation of Peking Opera ensemble timbre into a call and response between the saxophone and the piano can also be seen in figure 1.10. The melody played by the saxophone represents a Jinghu call, while the dissonant accented figure in the piano imitates the percussion response as it would often appear in Peking Opera.



Example 1.11 *The impression of Peking Opera*, the imagination of jinghu with percussive effect, bars 73-74

Peking Opera has had a deep influence on my work, whether in my techniques of melodic development, timbral arrangements or sound imitation. I have used many musical elements of Peking Opera as a point of inspiration for my contemporary musical writing, combining the traditional music of my country with my training as a modern composer. My hope is that the success of this exploration stems primarily from my meditation on the two important components of my musical life so far: the traditional and the modern, and the potential for developing the combination of the two.

Chapter 2 Samsara

From its inception to the completion of its many revisions, the work *Samsara* took around two years to create. The work was completed at Cardiff and selected by the SSR Music Ensemble for performance, and subsequently recorded by the saxophonist Jian Bo Wang in 2020. It is also a major work that I am finally creating and completing in 2020. The inspiration for this work came from the events that occurred during the tragedy of the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake. In the midst of the earthquake, a young mother had sacrificed herself to save her infant child by wrapping the child tightly in her embrace in order to shield the child from the impact of a collapsing roof. Before losing consciousness, the mother had written in her cellphone: ‘My child, if you survive this, remember that Mommy will always love you!’

In 2008 when the Wenchuan earthquake took place, I was in my third year of high school. In response to the tragedy, my Chinese teacher at the time decided to leave her class of students, who were preparing for final exams, to volunteer as an emergency responder at the scene of the earthquake. She had later returned to the classroom with touching stories of the rescue scene at Wenchuan, including the story of the young mother protecting her child. I also came across the same story in an article online, reporting on the rescue efforts that went on in the aftermath of the earthquake. Hearing about this story planted a seed in my mind to one day write a piece to commemorate this young mother’s sacrifice. After more than a decade, I had completed the work and wish that by dedicating this work to the young mother, my music could serve to comfort the survivors in the earthquake.

Writing this work was a very taxing experience for me. This was the first work which explores the combination of live instrumental performance and electronic music. Lacking in experience writing for this media, I spent a lot of energy thinking about how to best express the emotions I had wanted to capture in this medium. Therefore, since the first draft, it has taken many revisions to feel satisfied that the work represents my original conception of it.

My childhood musical training began on the saxophone and it is a timbre I think of most naturally. I decided to use its timbre to explore a down-to-earth way of expression: rather than to explore performance technique or instrumental sound, I approached the composition of this work strictly in terms of melody. I have written this piece from the perspective of a slowly unfolding development of melody, allowing the music to organically expand into an emotional narrative. The other reason is I had thought of using the soprano saxophone as a substitute for the sound of the ‘Suo Na’, a Chinese oboe instrument in traditional music. This instrument is frequently used as an announcement call. Because of the similarity in timbre between the soprano saxophone

and Suo Na, I decided to use the soprano saxophone line to convey the idea of ‘souls’ journey to the afterlife’. I have extensive experience in writing for the timbre of the saxophone, as seen in my other works featuring the instrument, including *The Impression of Peking Opera*. Originally, I had wanted to explore three different saxophones: baritone, alto and soprano. However, due to the limitation on the duration of the piece and considering how the frequent switching of instruments would affect a performer’s expression, I decided to limit the exploration to just two saxophones.

The basic emotions expressed in this work are those of sadness and desolation, respect and hope. Without overt ornamentation, this work strikes a tone of somberness in its commemoration of the dead. Grappling with this, I came up with a specific process. I spent a lot of time collecting samples, but as I started to piece together the composition, there was a few recordings which I decided not to include in the final work.

Hence, the process of elimination is very important to my approach in composing this piece. For example, the sound of machinery in factories and fireworks and exploding. These sounds are too simple and superficial, resulting in a work that feels like a stylized rather than a deep thought of choice. It is because of this emerging clarity that I was able to write into the music a depth of emotion pertaining to the human experience. From the perspective of modern composition, my hope is to express something of the organic human experience and human nature using an electronic medium.

The famous Chinese writer *Xun Lu* once wrote: ‘Tragedy is the act of shattering beauty.’⁸ In my composition, I seek to commemorate the events of the earthquake authentically and show not just the tragic but also the beautiful as a result of the natural disaster.

The work is largely split into two sections. The first section consists of the alto saxophone leading the narrative of the story from a melodic perspective. The second section from bar 133 is a soprano saxophone solo. The development of the single note motif is juxtaposed with the entry of the female voice line. The later entry of the sound of an infant’s cries from bar 150 represents the idea of renewal and reincarnation in the music. The incorporation of an overtone singing line from bar 132 further taints the music with a solemn and tragic atmosphere. The Bangzi line from bar 134 resembles the traditional percussive sound in Buddhist chanting.

First, the alto saxophone introduces the narrative, then the soprano sax takes over to push the music to its climax. Structurally, this allows me to effectively tell a story

⁸ Gorla, Davies, ‘Lu Xun’s Revolution’: *Writing in a Time of Violence*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, (2013)

without needing to resort to traditional western forms such as Binary, Ternary, or other frequently used structural forms.

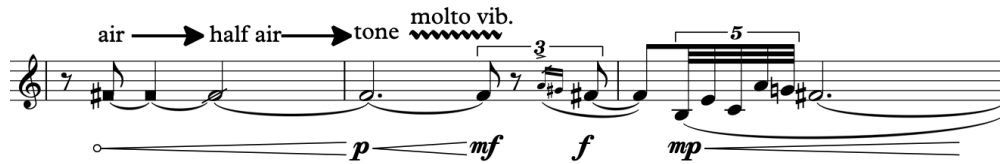
The sonic elements in this piece are:	Instrument or sound	Bar number
Sound sampling		Sound sampling
Elements of traditional Chinese music: Pipa, Guqin, Chinese percussion etc.	Pipa, Guzheng, Chinese percussion opera gong temple block (Chinese percussion), xiaoluo, bangzi, tubular bells etc.	Bar 7, 9, 42, 72, 73, 88. 98, 115 etc.
Human voice: recording sound effects	a voice line shouting a Chinese phrase, a Chinese monologue, Tibetan singing, Mongolian overtone singing, sound of an infant crying, sound of a man crying	From Bar 127, 128 to the end.
Instruments	string solo, string ensemble	Bar 72, 115 etc.
Mechanical sound	alarm (conveying danger and darkness)	Bar 49-61 etc.
Sounds of nature	impact of rocks, crashing sound of the earth splitting, wind sounds, rain sounds	Bar 22, 51, 62etc.

Table 1 The soundtrack

The interaction between saxophone and electronic sound

A. The electronic sound offers a time mark in terms of the development of the music
B. The electronic sound allows the performer to follow the music, achieving the function of bar lines and cues
C. The electronic sound create a seamless effect of interaction between the electronic sound and the saxophone

The use by changing form soprano to alto saxophone creates contrast in the development of the work's narrative and tone colour. The expression of two instruments are very different, with the soprano sax having a more concentrated higher sound and the alto sax having a more mellow bass. They are also played with a different sense of breath and require a different kind of performance from the player, who conveys a different acoustic mood. I focused on developing one aspect: using a single pitch as a pivotal central pitch in the melodic development.



Example 2.1 *Samsara*, saxophone solo, bars 9-11

When the saxophone solo first enters, the melody is centered around the written pitch of F#; that is the main basis of the melodic material and any deviation from this pitch serves to add richness to the melodic expression. Also, the advantage of anchoring the melody to a single pitch is the ability to create an atmosphere of vastness through the sustaining of the same note. This allows the music to set up the foundation of the narrative mood, giving the melody a sense of mystery.



Example 2.2 *Samsara*, saxophone solo, bars 12-16

In Example 2.2, it is very clear that the melody continuously develops on the single written pitch of B, with all ornamental elements serving to add further color to the B basis. The expansiveness of long lines is an important element in the melodic writing of this work.

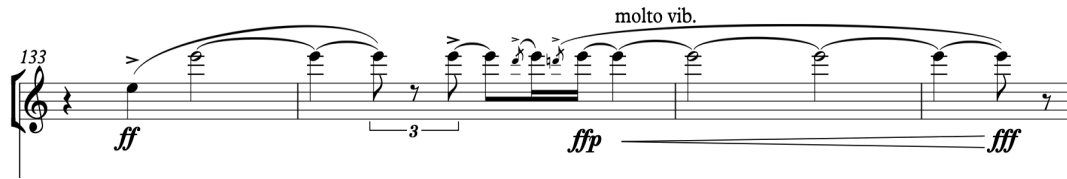
Developing the melody according to a fixed contour/shape:



Example 2.3 *Samsara*, saxophone solo, bar 111

In the work, I use a fixed intervallic relationship in the shape of melodic motifs, and the development of the long line is based on stringing together individual melodic cells that are identical in contour. Fixing the intervals in this way gives the work a tightness in the melodic logic.

When a motif continually transforms itself through the development of the piece, with each transformation only deviating slightly from the previous iteration. The way the melody above develops is presented in the form of a motivic imitation, with the lines forming an acceding trend.



Example 2.4 *Samsara*, soprano saxophone solo, bars 133-136

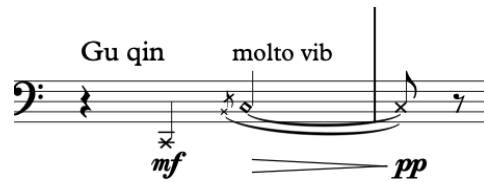
The soprano saxophone plays at sustained pitch in a high register to imitate the traditional sound effect of the Suona⁹. Suona players are accustomed to a performance technique called “Na Han” (translating roughly to the cries of the instrument), and this sound effect is most commonly seen in funeral processions which announces the departure of souls into the afterlife. This sound effect therefore symbolizes the transcendence of souls in this work.



Figure 1 *Guqin* by Zhao Wen photography, Chinese Guqin Museum 2016

The electronic part is comprised of tracks containing sounds of guqin, pipa and traditional Chinese percussion. Guqin is an instrument with a rich history of development in performance technique; it is also one of the oldest traditional Chinese instruments still played today. There is a Chinese adage of how an intellectual person must possess expertise in *Qin-qi-shu-hua* (Music, Chess, Books, Painting), among which “Qin” directly refers to the instrument of guqin.

⁹ Min, Wang, ‘The Musical and Cultural Meanings of Shandong Guchuiyue from the People’s Republic of China’. Kent, Ohio, Kent State University Press, (2014)



Example 2.5 *Samsara*, guqin solo, bars 7-8

The opening of *Samsara* uses a recording of a solo guqin performance to create the effect of travelling back in time, allowing the audience to gain a perspective of music an intellectual in Ancient China would possess.

Moreover, in Chinese traditional music there is a lack of bass instruments such as what you'd find in the Western context. As a Chinese composer, I often find that within the aesthetics of traditional Chinese music, there exists a gap related to lower sonorities. Therefore, I would like to fill this aesthetic gap through a solo performance of guqin in a lower register to reconstruct the aesthetic image of traditional Chinese music. In the piece, the plucking effect of guqin in a lower register to fill this aesthetic gap for traditional music. Furthermore, in traditional music, the guqin is often defined as a solo instrument. It is also rare for works to combine the guqin with other instruments or in electronic sound in contemporary music.



Figure 2 *Pipa* by Liu Jiang photography, Intangible culture heritage Museum 2017

Pipa is also a traditional Chinese instrument with a rich history of 2000 years. In *Samsara*, I have used a motif grounded in the timbre of the Pipa. The inspiration for this Pipa motif comes from the famous traditional tune 'Ambush'. The background of

this tune is rooted in battle scenes of a turbulent period in Chinese history: the Spring and Autumn Period¹⁰ (771 to 476 BC).

1 = D
【一】 列营

由慢到快

十面埋伏

Ambush

Allegro a piacere 快板 随兴所至

古曲 杨宝智改编

88 Pipa

Example 2.6 *Samsara*, pipa solo, bars 88-89

The Pipa solo shown in example 2.6 opens with a lot of different colors and intervals, symbolizing danger and the imminence of war. In *Samsara*, the use of open string intervals not only alludes to the famous tune and expresses the claustrophobia that accompanies this feeling.

¹⁰ Cho-yun, Hsu, 'The Spring and Autumn Period', 'The Cambridge history of ancient China': *from the origins of civilization to 221 BC*, Cambridge University Press, (2000)

Example 2.7 *Samsara*, saxophone solo, bars 98-100

The use of traditional Chinese percussion instruments in this work serves two functions: Firstly, it acts as time marker for saxophonists, as well as a serving metronomic function. For example, bangzi plays an important downbeat in every bar to keep time for performers playing against the track.

Chinese Opera Gong 小锣

Example 2.8 *Samsara*, xiaoluo solo, bar 9

The Chinese Opera Gong is an instrument used in everyday life in Ancient China for a myriad of functions, like alerting villagers to the dangers of fire or used by patrolling guards in small cities. In *Samsara*, the opening entry of the Opera Gong serves to alert the audience to the dramatic effect about the coming of the music.

Female voice

Example 2.9 *Samsara*, female voice, bars 16-17

Example 2.10 *Samsara*, male voice, bars 58-60

(normal speech rhythm but slightly dramatic)自由一点

苍! 天! 呐!
Oh My God
fff

Example 2.11 *Samsara*, male voice, bars 121-122

Human voice samples appear as both spoken sounds and melodic sounds.

Dramatic sounds include a voice line shouting a Chinese phrase: ‘Cross the forest’, ‘Oh my god’, the sound of an infant crying, sound of a man crying. The different lines of dramatic singing in the work serve to undermine the audience’s expectation of a linear narrative in the music. In the different voice lines, the expression conveyed is vastly different and might not necessarily be related to one another, nor can it be strictly related to the narrative of the unfolding events of the earthquake.

Female voice

Example 2.12 *Samsara*, female voice, bars 135-136

The crux of expression of this work lies in the second half of the piece where Tibetan singing and Mongolian overtone singing are used. In this section of this piece, not only does the use of the soprano saxophone line imitating the Suona which is a Chinese woodwind traditional instrument, the use of melodic singing recordings (Tibetan singing and Mongolian overtone singing) also further adds to the ethnic atmosphere of the music.

Overtone singing呼麦

Example 2.13 *Samsara*, overtone singing, bar 132

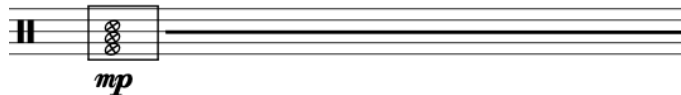
Rainy sound

Example 2.14 *Samsara*, rainy sound, bars 9-10



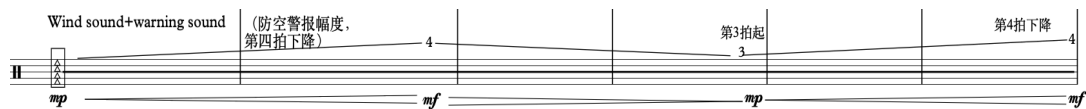
Example 2.15 *Samsara*, bird sound, bars 80-83

- Rainy sound with wind sound



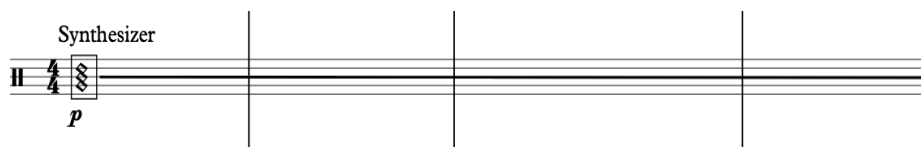
Example 2.16 *Samsara*, rainy sound with wind sound, bar 107

Sounds of nature are used in this piece mainly to provide a framework for the other electronic sounds to unfold. The usage of these sounds references a tradition that emerged in earlier electronic music; at the birth of electronic music in France in the 50s, the use of nature sounds in ‘musique concrète’. *Samsara* incorporates many natural sounds such as the sound of rocks clashing, the earth splitting open, the sound of wind and rain, to specifically evoke the imagery of tragedy at the scene of the earthquake the main idea of this inclusion is to provide a narrative background on which the other musical elements can unfold.



Example 2.17 *Samsara*, wind sound and warning sound, bars 49-54

The sound of the alarm evokes the feeling of the imminence of danger, and although the sound is not particularly loud within the context of the other electronic sounds, it nevertheless emphasizes the narrative idea that danger is upon us.



Example 2.18 *Samsara*, synthesizer, bars 1-4

I listened to many examples of electronic works for inspiration. For example, *Répons* (Pierre Boulez), *Pendulum Music for microphones, amplifiers, speakers and performers* (Steve Reich), *Persepolis* (Iannis Xenakis), *Synchronisms No. 6 for Piano and Electronic Sound* (Mario Davidovsky), *Contrappunto dialettico alla mente* (Luigi Nono). I realized that I prefer a natural sounding feel to my work, as the relationship between man and nature is an integral theme which I aim to explore with this piece.

Composition is a process of the exploration of sound. Collecting sounds from nature is also a process of exploring sound and thinking about how to use it. The collection of nature sounds is also a part of materials in composition. In terms of choosing materials, this piece is also a big challenge for me.

Up until now, *Samsara* is a work amongst my compositions that has been most successful with audiences, both in a performance context and in a competitive context. I believe part of this success can be attributed to the combination of many varied musical elements, including elements of modern electronic music such as the use of nature sounds, Chinese traditional musical elements such as recording samples of traditional instruments and ethnic singing styles, as well as melodic development of saxophone lines. The positive experience I have had with this work bodes well for future projects in the electronic medium.

Chapter 3 Sail to the South

The work *Sail to the South* is the first work of mine written for a traditional Chinese chamber ensemble. Although this piece was written specifically for a traditional Chinese ensemble, in its compositional style, I still sought to emulate writing techniques of the West and to pursue the seamless combination between traditional Chinese music and western compositional styles. In terms of cultural inheritance, there is a famous Chinese proverb, “what belongs to the tribe, belongs to the world”. As a contemporary Chinese composer, my hope is to reflect on how to bring this proverb to fruition through my compositions. Therefore, composing a work for traditional Chinese instruments while retaining my identity as a composer trained in the West is very important to me. *Sail to the South* is an attempt to realize this ideal.

There are many contemporary Chinese composers who were educated in the West: for example, *Yi Chen, Long Zhou, Dun Tan, and Xiaogang Ye*¹¹. They have used Western compositional techniques in the context of traditional music in three significant ways:

1. Many choose to use Western instruments while writing in a Chinese style in order to ‘Westernize’ the aesthetic of the music through instrumental timbre.
2. Some use Chinese traditional instruments to explore a Chinese aesthetic in timbre while deploying distinctly Western techniques of composition. The complexity and diversity of the score are not very different from that of many contemporary musical works.
3. Other composers create a combination of Chinese traditional instruments and Western instruments, to explore a new kind of aesthetic.

After the Cultural Revolution, many contemporary Chinese composers went to the West. Among them, *Yi Chen* is a composer who works prolifically to combine Chinese and Western Classical music. For example, her Erhu Concerto *Erhu Suite* as written in two different versions: one orchestrated for Western symphony orchestra, and the other orchestrated for traditional Chinese orchestra. Both versions have their own musically compelling features: for the symphonic version, the music is solemn and grand, while for the traditional Chinese orchestral version, the music is rich in color and While retaining a traditional sound. This large-scale work succeeds in both versions as the composer intends.

¹¹Barone, Joshua ‘Asian Composers Reflect on Careers in Western Classical Music’. The New York Times, (2002)

Some contemporary Chinese composers work to incorporate traditional Chinese instruments and Western instruments to form a hybrid ensemble, creating contrast within the ensemble itself. This arrangement of instruments is now becoming more and more prevalent in concerts in China, and many works have already successfully mastered this combining of instrumental timbres. However, in the West modern composition space, it remains a rarity to see contemporary composers incorporate traditional Chinese instruments in their compositions or any other ethnic traditional instruments for the matter. I personally believe this to be the most significant divergence between musical institutions in the West and the East, as institutions in the East dedicate many resources to the study of traditional music, traditional composition, and ethnomusicology, while in most performance-based musical institutions in the West, the focus is still largely on Western Art music. I believe this lack of diversity in Western musical institutions needs to be properly examined in order to innovate in contemporary pieces.

Sail to the South employs techniques that work in the second category of contemporary Chinese compositions: the use of traditional instruments to explore a Chinese aesthetic in timbre with distinctly Western techniques of composition.

This work was written in two versions: the first version uses the cello to add more dimension to its lower registers and deepen the harmonic resonance in the piece. It includes the Chinese flute, sheng, pipa, percussion, daruan, erhu, and cello. The second version does not include the cello and uses other instruments to compensate for the support in the lower register. It includes the Chinese flute, sheng, pipa, percussion, daruan, and erhu.

The following table is the second version:

Section 1	Section 2	Transition 1	Section3
Bar 1-34	Bar 35-44	Bar 45-49	Bar 50-94
Tempo:42-56-76	Tempo:(138-142)	Tempo72	Tempo160
Extended technique on Traditional instruments	Tutti with solo percussion instrument	Subito slower tutti with solo percussion instrument	Presto, complex texture and homophony followed by zhudi as leader

Improvisation	Transition 2	Coda
Bar 95-107	Bar 95-107	Bar 139-149
Tempo:160	Tempo:98-66-110	Tempo:56
Improvisation by the given materials in the boxes and ending together followed by conductor	Sheng solo and recapitulation by the materials from section 1	Pentatonic melody initiation and homophony

Table 2 *Sail to the south* structure

The melodic construction of traditional music :



Example 3.1 *Sail to the South*, erhu solo, bars 142-145

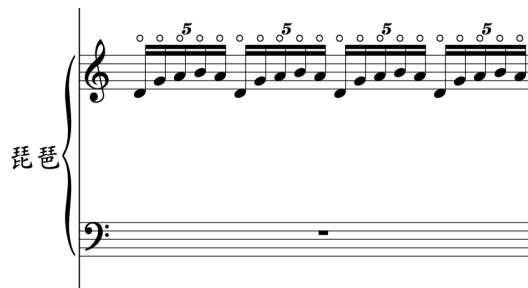


Example 3.2 *Sail to the South*, qudi solo, bars 144-146

In this work, there is a minimal use of the traditional Chinese pentatonic scale - the usage is only apparent in the ending of the erhu and dizi melody (bar 142 and 144). The melody used in those parts is not a direct quotation from traditional music (whether it is in the context of traditional song from Chinese ethnic cultures or regional opera tunes). The melodic material is therefore completely original. The melodic writing for the Erhu imitates human vocalization and thus gives the impression of a narrative voice, while the melody used in the Dizi imitates the Erhu melody a perfect fifth higher, making the melody sound bright and aiding in the development of the music towards the climax.

Due to the limitations of the instrumentation and playing methods of traditional instruments, it is not possible to write melodies in exactly the same way as the extreme individuality of Western contemporary music. So, I have chosen to write melodic features that are more in tune with the traditional style of music. This is the balance that I have been searching for in my compositions.

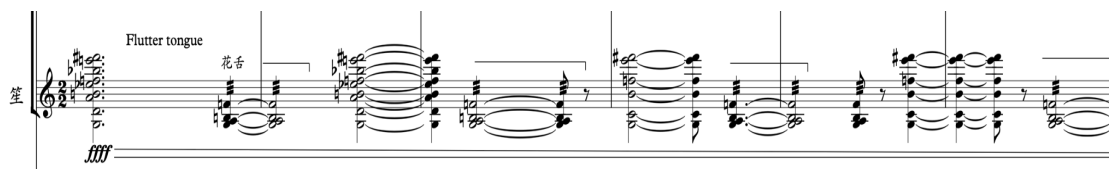
The texture used in the accompaniment part is essentially an ostinato figure of a fixed pentatonic melody, which also doubles as a harmonic progression and creates textural contrast within the orchestration of the entire piece. The use of harmonics at the end of the piece contrasts in acoustic intensity with all the preceding structures. The light harmonics are particularly soft against the background of the static texture. The repetitive nature of the ostinato figure helps establish a flow that contrasts with the static accompaniment which occurs frequently in traditional music in the form of vertical chord movements. Being able to hear every single note's sound production is one of the most significant advantages of the Pipa as an accompaniment instrument. Therefore, the use of this instrument in the accompaniment part allows for the music to maximally achieve contrast and drama.



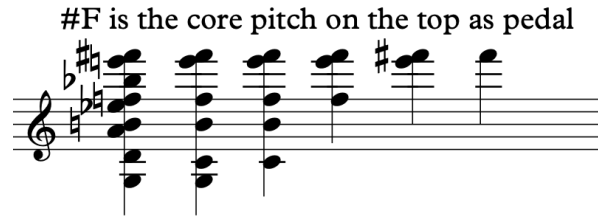
Example 3.3 *Sail to the South*, pipa solo, bar 142

In the ending section, the Pipa quintuplet figure (DGAB) achieves the effect of movement in a high register and accentuates the development of the entire musical effect within the ensemble. Moreover, the nature of sound production of plucked instruments makes it impossible for the instrument to play the role of a sustained vertical harmony unless written as an ostinato figure — the effect of this is similar to the harmonic colour added by the harp in a Western orchestra within the orchestral sound. The Pipa texture works together very well with the Erhu and Dizi lines, meandering between the two to further highlight the melodious qualities of the two lines, mitigating the distinction between accompaniment and melody and creating a better textural effect. My priority was to make careful choices about the register of the instruments used in order to best facilitate for blending of sounds and balance of tone colour. I am conscious of the difference between the Western orchestral sound and the ensemble sound of traditional Chinese instruments — in a Western orchestra, the sounds of different instruments naturally blend together because of the instrumental sounding features, timbre and the study of musical temperament, while in the context of traditional Chinese instruments, each instrument has such a unique sound which makes it hard to blend with others. An important goal for me is intelligent orchestration and sensitivity to the fluidity of texture is a significant challenge to overcome in the creation of a modern work that aims to utilise traditional instrumental sounds to its fullest extent.

The above example uses the cluster effect of the semitone, which has an effect that is informed by my exposure to 20th century Western harmonic approaches.



Example 3.4 *Sail to the South*, sheng, bars 108-113



Example 3.5 *Sail to the South*, sheng, harmony analysis, bar 108

F sharp is the top note and core pitch in the first chord. The higher and lower voices of the bass chord proceed in reverse, culminating in a sustained tone with B as the core pitch. For me, using clusters on top of traditional pitch materials is a way of exploring the contemporary and traditional.

Amongst traditional Chinese instruments, only the Sheng has the unique tone qualities that make it suitable for creating richer harmonic colours. In terms of timbre, the Sheng is best suited to the expression of tension and release and hence has a unique character amongst traditional Chinese instruments, which made it useful in the composition of this work.



Example 3.6 *Sail to the South*, daruan extended technique, bars 31-32

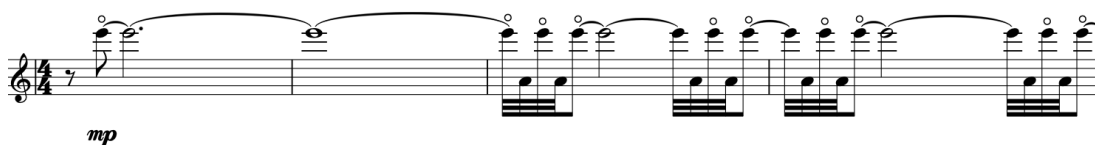
In writing for daruan, I introduced an extended technique (a Western musical concept) asking for performers to pluck the strings with guitar picks or credit cards in order to create an oscillating effect between two fixed notes. My goal is to explore a modern musical language within the identity of Chinese music, to try to innovate from the existing ideas of usage of traditional Chinese instruments and leave our musical comfort zones.

On the application of traditional Chinese percussion instruments, which is rooted in Chinese opera tradition.



Example 3.7 *Sail to the South*, xiaogu, bars 45-49

Bangu is an instrument frequently used in Peking Opera and is crisp in timbre, making it very suitable for playing fast and flashy passages like the one in example 3.7. However, the sound effect seems to be too pronounced when using the bangu, producing too direct a sound reference to the traditional setting. Hence, I decided to use the xiaogu for this figure as it could blend more harmoniously with the other instruments. For me, it is important to think not just about its timbre but also its contextual associations, and through this exploration, consider the unique role each percussion instrument plays within the sound world of traditional Chinese music. If need be, we must replace conventional instruments with other more obscure traditional instruments, or even with Western instruments at times, in order to avoid musical clichés and unwanted associations.



Example 3.8 *Sail to the South*, erhu, bars 118-121

In the performance of erhu, the instrumental part combines many harmonics and normal notes. The combination of the tone colours of harmonics and normal notes is a distinct feature of my writing style for the erhu, a style I had developed since the composition of my earlier work *Xue Guo*. This combination of colours is very compatible with the traditional Chinese aesthetic of poetry, as ancient Chinese poets often explore the ideas of reality versus fantasy in their imagery. Hence, in my work, I adapted these thematic ideas to portray this interaction between the music and a distinctly Chinese aesthetic, using harmonics to represent ‘fantasy’ and normal notes to represent “reality” and explore the state of flitting between the two.

竹笛
笙
琵琶
大阮
打击乐
二胡

88

mp *mf*

f *ff*

Dagou 大鼓 双击 鼓边

f *ff*

f *ff*

Example 3.9 *Sail to the South*, the inspiration of orchestration by bangu, bars 88-90

The zhudi semi-quaver rapid figures originate in inspiration from the percussive rhythms of Chinese opera. In traditional Chinese opera, the ensemble is purely a collaboration between instrumentalists. In order to coordinate between all the instrumentalists, the percussive bangu actually serves the role of a conductor, accompanying the actors and gesturing to different instruments, achieving the effect of leading the ensemble with all instrumentalists listening to the bangu and fitting their musical parts into the rhythms accordingly. My hope is that it creates a structural tightness which create the effect of musical unity within the ensemble, as if it is one organism accompanying the actors on stage.

Chapter 4 Snow River

Snow River is my fourth choral work, and it has undergone a number of revisions. I find choral compositions to be a unique challenge especially as the incorporation of text with music can reveal a composer's grasp of melody, harmony and counterpoint. My revisions have been the result of continual work to improve text setting in my compositions.

The text for *Snow River* comes from a Tang Dynasty poem by *Zongyuan Liu*, written in the 5-character form. The poem uses many metaphors to capture scenes of nature — the first subject of the poem is a scene of isolation in nature and captures the atmosphere of a man alone in a wintery landscape, with all wildlife in hibernation. The second subject of the poem describes a lonely fisherman out at sea on a raft, fishing alone on a frosty river, describing isolation in the face of great difficulty.

The original text in Chinese is:

柳宗元 唐代

千山鸟飞绝，万径人踪灭。

孤舟蓑笠翁，独钓寒江雪。

Figure 3 *Snow river* poem

There are three translated versions of the poem that I personally resonate with, and these versions I believe capture the essence of the poem's expression. Each one is translated differently, especially the third one which can be so concise. They are all very characteristic of rhythm and beautiful.

Version 1:

Snow River

Mountains by the thousand but the last bird flown,
And myriad footpaths with no human traces shown.
Solitary boat and an old man in rush cape and cap,
Alone fishing in the cold river snow.
(Translated by *Yu Zheng, Zhiji Ren*)

Version 2:

Snow River

A thousand mountains no birds flying
Ten thousand paths devoid of human trace
A lone boat, a bark-caped old man—
Alone, he angles a cold river of snow.
(Translated by *Shenzhu Chun*)

Version 3:

Fishing in Snow
From hill to hill no bird in flight
From path to path no man is sight
A lonely fishman afloat
Is fishing snow in lonely
(Translated by *Yuanchun Xu*)

Figure 4.2 *Snow river* poem translation

Within Chinese literature, this poem is extremely famous and represents the Chinese literary canon, in the same way, the Sonnets of Shakespeare form a cornerstone of English literature. My intention was to capture the atmosphere of the beauty in bleakness as well as a sense of heroism frequently associated with ancient Chinese martial arts masters' solitary training in the mountain. I have incorporated soprano and tenor solos, guttural timbres and improvisations in order to solve issues of variety and richness in the music. My goal was to unite a Chinese aesthetic inspired by literature and a modern vocal performance style.

In the following analysis I will discuss this work in terms of its different compositional aspects, starting with the use of lyrics:

Adagio $\text{♩} = 56$ 孤独 悠远的

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

哟 Yoo

哟 Yoo

哟 Yoo

哟 Yoo

哟 Yoo

哟 Yoo

...

Example 4.1 *Snow River*, 'yoo' bars 1-5

73

呜 Wu

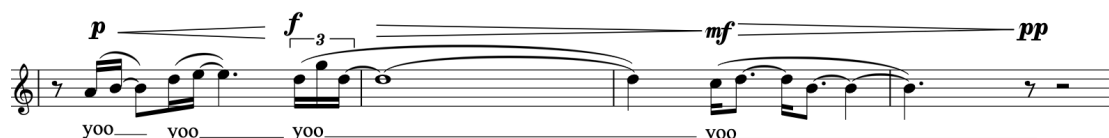
呜 Wu

Example 4.2 *Snow River*, 'wu', bars 75-79

Usage of vocables in traditional Chinese folk song:

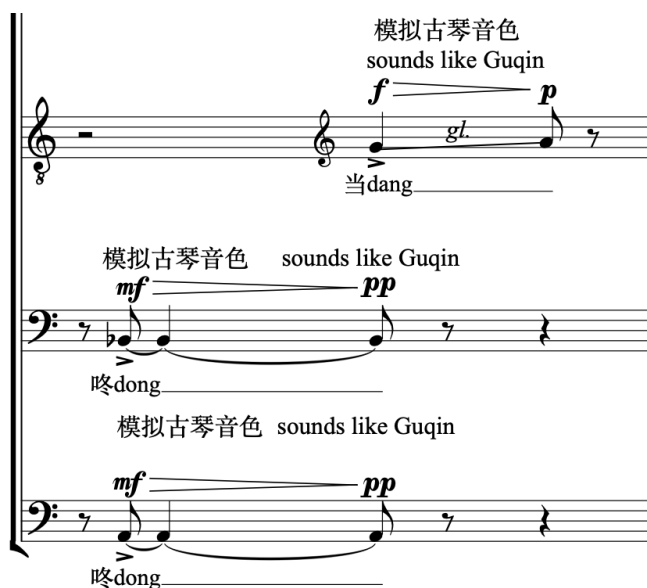
'Yoo' is a vocable used often in the context of colloquial language, usually appearing at end or beginning of sentences in order to express a tone of voice. It does

not express any specific semantic meaning. In traditional Chinese folk song, we often hear this syllable, and it is usually used in an opening prologue or weaved into a middle voice of the piece in order to deepen the richness of the musical atmosphere. In many Southern ethnic minorities in Chinese, music that accompanied folk dances would often use this vocable as a heightening of musical tension. Furthermore, this vocable also gives the feeling of vividness and expanse, allowing the audience to immerse in an atmospheric image, which is precisely why I have chosen to use this element liberally at the beginning of the music.



Example 4.3 *Snow River*, melody, bars 15-18

In order to create the atmosphere expressed in the poem, I had conceived of the work in a horizontal way that coincides with the mood of expansiveness and isolation. The long lines are often combinations of motives and duration of long notes, with more emphasis on breathability and a sense of melodic direction.



Example 4.4 *Snow River*, guqin effect, bar 3

In the third opening bar of the work, the bass voice sings the word ‘dong’, which imitates the timbre of the guqin, which is a traditional 7-string plucked instrument. In my other work *Samsara*, I have explained in detail the importance of guqin as an instrument in the oeuvre of traditional Chinese music. ‘dong’ as a vocable sound very similar to a plucked note in a bass register on the guqin, while ‘Dang’ sounds like the reverberations in the air after a plucked note. In the music, I had used both frequently

to construct a complete imitation of the timbre of guqin, expressing the idea of unity between the sound production and reverberations of the instrument. On guqin and other traditional Chinese instruments, glissando is a very important performance technique. Therefore, in writing for the human voice, I also incorporated a lot of glissandi in order to fully imitate instrumental sound.

My priority in this work is to achieve a unity between the language content and the musical content. In trying to achieve the Chinese aesthetic that is key to the rhythms of the poem, I chose to approach it with imitation of instrumental timbre with the human voice indeed many modern Chinese composers have also adopted this technique in composing for the voice. For example, in *Spring Dreams* by Yi Chen, there are many instances of the voice imitating the effects of traditional plucked instruments.

air sound, follow the motif in the box, improvisation, sounds like 'wind'

The musical notation consists of a bass clef staff. The first measure contains five notes with a dynamic marking of *mp* and a fermata over the first three notes. The second measure contains two notes with a dynamic marking of *mf* and a glissando marking (*gl.*) over the first note. The third measure contains two notes with a dynamic marking of *p < f > pp* and a glissando marking (*gl.*) over the first note. The fourth measure contains a long note with a dynamic marking of *f* and a glissando marking (*gl.*) over it. Below the staff, there are Chinese characters '嘘xu' under the first measure and '嘘' under the second measure.

Example 4.5 *Snow River*, sound like wind, bars 4-5

Although the poem never explicitly describes the sound of the wind, the atmosphere created by the text gives a sense of wintry and desolate isolation, and hence the idea emerged to incorporate elements in the vocal lines that imitate the sounds of nature which can best create this atmosphere. Before I started composing this piece, I had thought about two approaches to this imitation. firstly, I thought of using the vocable 'Xu', which in its pronunciation highly resembles a gust of wind, to conjure the image of the wind in the music while retaining maximum flexibility in the strength of the wind sounds through the versatility of the vocable itself. Secondly, I thought of using techniques of improvisation to imitate the free-flowing nature of wind, starting from the fourth bar; in fact, this method of notation which builds in a section for improvisation is frequently seen in Western music, such as in *Lutoslawski's* symphonic works.

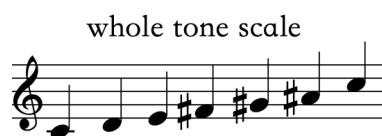
In traditional Chinese music, the pentatonic scale is extremely important to the construction of melody, and this is presented very clearly in this work. In the second part of this work, 'Fisherman's Song', I had specifically written a section of music that develops on the idea of melodic imitation in the pentatonic scale. to evoke a Classical Chinese aesthetic.

The musical notation is in treble clef and shows a pentatonic scale. The notes are G, A, B, C, D, E, F#. Above the notes are Chinese characters: 宫, 商, 角, 清角, 徵, 羽, 变宫.

Gong Shang Jue Qingjue Zhi Yu Biangong

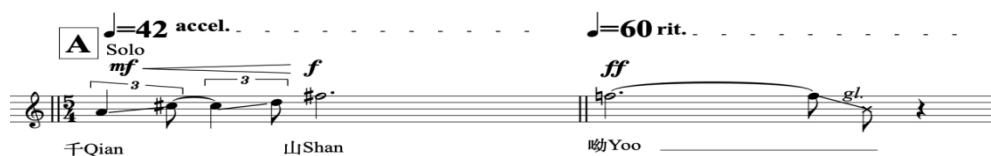
Example 4.6 *Snow River*, ‘fisherman’ Song’, bar 48

The scale from fisherman’s Song corresponds to key of D major in Western music. Each note has a corresponding Chinese name *Gong-shang-jue-qingjiao-zhi-yu-biangong*(宫, 商, 角, 清角, 徵, 羽, 变宫). In traditional music, however, the pitches G and B are not core pitches. The melodic effect of the addition of the transposition is somewhat of a departure from the pentatonic scale with D as the tonic and has a similar coloring effect in terms of harmonic coloring to that of tonal departure. The melody is not transposed, however, and this change in harmonic coloring suggests a feeling of a departure from the tonic in Western music.



Example 4.7 *Snow River*, harmony, bar 87

The harmony at the end is a combination of a whole-tone scale with C as the first pitch. The ethereal feeling created by the whole-tone scale matches the mood of the last lines of the poem.



Example 4.8 *Snow River*, soprano solo, bars 26-27



Example 4.81 *Snow River*, tenor solo, bars 46-47

72

The image shows a musical score for bar 72 of 'Snow River'. It consists of eight staves, each representing a different vocal part. The parts are: Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto 1, Tenor solo, Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Tenor 3, and Tenor 4. Each staff begins with a treble clef (except for Tenor 3 and Tenor 4, which use bass clefs). The notation for each part shows a glissando (marked 'gl.') starting on a note and moving upwards, with a forte dynamic marking ('ff'). Below each staff, the Chinese vocal sound '呦yoo' is written. The Tenor solo part is marked with a '5' below the staff, indicating a fifth line. The Tenor 3 and Tenor 4 parts are marked with a '7' below the staff, indicating a seventh line.

Example 4.82, *Snow River*, vocal sound, bar 72

In Classical Chinese literature scenes of ominous danger such as a battle is about to break out, provide an opportunity to explore vocal sounds. For example, in bar 26, in the use of a soprano glissando which is dramatically evokes associations to Chinese Opera and Chinese Art Songs. In bar 45, the tenor solo section musically sets up for the soprano solo in bar 68 — the text in the tenor solo mainly consists of vocables devoid of semantic meaning, and the main purpose of that section is simply to evoke an atmosphere of tension that is characteristic of the ominous mood of a battle that is about to break out. In bar 72, the choir as a whole sings a series of glissandi which then pushes the music to a climax.

Example 4.9, *Snow River*, real and imaginary sound, bars 68-73

From bar 68 to 72, the soprano solo sung in the style of Chinese Opera leads the music, with the tenor solo echoing. The first alto line also repeats the same lyrics and creates contrast by appearing in a lower register, while in the bass part, the use of vocables darkens the atmosphere of the music. The use of wind effects and melodic contrasts create a combination of real and imaginary contrasts.

In conceiving *Snow River*, I focused on balance and interweaving of musical elements to express the poetic meaning of the text. Through this process, I had come to realise the suitability of Classical Chinese poetry for text setting to music, and I have become determined to compose more works which draw from Classical Chinese text.

Chapter 5 Snow Country

Snow Country is my third orchestral work and is part of a series drawing influence from modern Chinese literature. The inspiration for the work comes from the novel *The Last Quarter of The Moon*, written by *Zijian Chi*. The story recounts the autobiographical tale of a female Chieftain's life, exploring a Chinese ethnic minority ewenki¹² hunting tribe's rise to glory and slow descent into oblivion. In *Snow Country*, the texture and structure of the music presents the ideas of ice and snow in its various forms, and through sounds, attempts to evoke the wintry scenes of hunting, rituals, nostalgia and suffering depicted in the novel.

The concept for this orchestral work was inspired by the mountainous regions at the borders between northern China and Russia. In the work, I attempt to express the bleakness of arctic winds, snow and the brutality of the mountains through the textural organization of the orchestra. The first challenge in writing this work that I must overcome is to find a sound language in the orchestra that appropriately expresses the never-ending desolation of a harsh and barren landscape.

Although this work, unlike my previous works, does not draw from traditional Chinese music in obvious ways, it nevertheless symbolically represents elements of traditional Chinese culture through a myriad of musical ways without resorting to usage of Chinese musical idioms. I wanted to break out of my compositional sphere and find a new direction or style without resorting to the obvious traditional Chinese music.

¹² Chaoke D.O., Wang Lizhen, [鄂温克族宗教信仰与文化] Beijing, Minzu University of China Press, (2002)

Example 5.1 *Snow Country*, strings, bars 7-9

The movement of pitch in the melody and the movement of harmony itself becomes unified, which blurs the lines in the separation between melody and harmony. This compositional technique is not novel and one of the best examples of this way of writing is in *Ligeti's* work *Atmosphères*. *Atmosphères* eschews conventional melody, harmony, and rhythm, in favor of "sound masses" with sliding and merging orchestral clusters that suggest timbre is the central focus of the piece¹³.

Example 5.11 *Snow Country*, cello, bar 7

In this example, the lower string is a motivic pattern in five successive notes, repeating upwards and building tension from low to high, to suggest that restlessness and danger are imminent, contrasting with the placid effect of the violin's high notes.

¹³ Sitsky, Larry, 'Music of the Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde' Greenwood Publishing, (2002), pp.256

Distant ♩ = 52

Example 5.2 *Snow Country*, strings, bars 1-5

In the beginning of the work, the string section is split into many voices with a variety of performance techniques. The strings use a mixture of stopped pitches and harmonics played in rapid succession to create the imagery of the theme. The harmonic effect is light and obscure, creating a layer of sound which floats above the regular pitches. My intention was to create a base layer in the orchestral sound.

Example 5.3 *Snow Country*, strings, bars 11-15

Besides the combination of regular pitches and harmonics, another technique I experimented with is the sustained development of lines built from harmonics as a background layer to the unfolding of the musical narrative. The harmonics used in the cello and bass lines are quite easy for performers to play, as they mainly constitute natural harmonics on the instruments. In terms of pitch, I experimented with a variety

of consonances and dissonances between natural and artificial harmonics in order to find the delicate balance of contrast and blended-ness in the string sections as a whole.



An orchestral score for strings and woodwinds. The score is written for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The music is in 4/4 time and features a complex texture with overlapping lines and dynamic markings such as *pp* and *fff*. The strings play sustained notes with some movement, while the woodwinds have more active parts.



A musical notation example showing a two-measure phrase. The first measure contains a vertical chord with notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, and D5. The second measure contains a melodic line starting on Bb4 and moving chromatically up to B4, with a final note on B4. The bass line is mostly silent, with a few notes in the second measure.

Example 5.4 *Snow Country*, harmony, bars 37-40

The harmonies of the strings are superimposed in the manner of pentatonic and the feel of a pentatonic scale in coloring, but it can be seen that they are formed by a scale in which the tonic is B flat and the end in B natural. Looking at the chromatic relationship between the tonic and the leading note in terms of the scale can create differences in coloring. The vertical harmonic coloring is somewhat eastern, but in terms of the form of the scale combinations, it is a westernized approach to scales.



Figure 5 *Chin* by Zhang Xiao photography, Jokhang Temple 2019

In *Snow Country*, I use a Trombone sustained note in a low register, combined with the glissando effect, to imitate the brass sound of the Tibetan Chin. The use of the trombone slides in music is meant to evoke the image of hunting or the battlefield, leaning into musical idioms that are frequently used in Tibetan folk music. However, the orchestra has been able to find the instrument in recent decades.



Figure 6 *Tibetan bowl* by Liu Le photography, Tibet Museum 2010

To create the impression of a Tibetan singing bowl in an orchestral context, I have chosen to use the traditional Chinese percussion instrument xiaobo, playing in the extended technique of scratching the instrument music.

Example 5.5 *Snow Country*, xiaobo, bars 103-106

The xiaobo scratching sound can vary from extremely soft to extremely loud, as since the percussion section is often positioned at the very back of the orchestra, the xiaobo can also be heard from a sonorous position relative to the rest of the music. This allows the expressiveness of the Xiaobo to be maximally realized, infusing the music with mystery, tension and color, as well as an element of anticipation for further surprise. The scratching technique is not often used in performing the xiaobo. The most often seen performance style for this instrument is to crash two plates of Xiaobo into each other (similar to playing cymbals). The scratching of the xiaobo creates a sound that resembles the sound of wind, which fits perfectly with the imagery expressed in the music.

In this section of the music, the Xiaobo is also in dialogue with other percussion instruments. Sometimes the 3 other percussions overtake the xiaobo in volume, other times the xiaobo sound pierces through the other instruments. This weaving together of percussive sounds promote horizontality in the music and pushed the movement forwards, as if between the instrument dialogue the sound creates a bitonal effect in overtones.

In this work, I draw mainly from sounds of nature in order to inform how to most effectively orchestrate the work. I considered the core musical material in the form of a piano score, in order to sketch out the main musical elements (minus orchestration) that I would like to design into the narrative. Then, without forming the complete image of the piece on a piano reduction, I directly mapped out my musical ideas of contour and structure on an orchestral score, sewing together the musical fragments I had worked out on the piano.

I conceived of three different ways of orchestrating in order to express the scenes of nature in terms of the abstract expression of music:

1. The merging of the real and the fantasy
2. The contrast between stillness and motion
3. Unique performance technique of orchestral instruments

Example 5.6 *Snow Country*, strings, bars 11-15

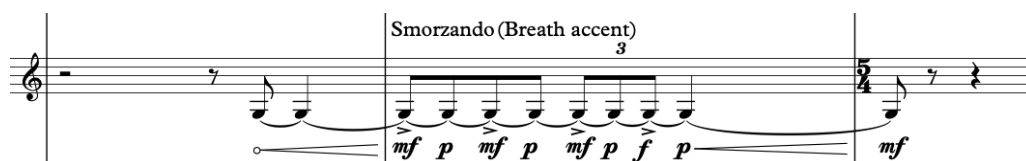
In the above score example, the lower strings serve as the background with a series of harmonics, creating an effect of lightness, fantasy and evoking the image of falling snowflakes. The violins and violas simultaneously play by over-pressuring the bow, creating a fluid momentum of horizontality as well as mimicking the sound of flurrying wind. At the same time, the glissandi of the bass also add the motions of wind. When the upper strings enter into the passage of sustained long notes in a higher register, the movement of the music shifts abruptly and adds to the play on texture as part of the story-telling whole.

Example 5.7 *Snow Country*, strings, bars 11-16

In the above section, I further elaborated on the idea of contrasting harmonics in stillness and in motion in terms of orchestration of the string section. Besides the third and fourth line of the second violins, all the other string lines are based on harmonics, creating the ebb and flow of stillness and motion and evoking the movement of snowflakes in the musical imagery. In the first violin, second violin and first and second lines of the viola, the movement of the harmonics signify motion, while in the third line of the violin, the cello and the bass, the harmonics represent stillness. In terms of innovating on traditional techniques of orchestration, I feel I still have much to meditate on and *Snow Country* serves as only the first step in my continual exploration of new ways of making the orchestra expressive in my works.

Example 5.8 *Snow Country*, strings, bars 4-5

In this score example 5.8, the two flutes and piccolo enter in the beginning of the piece, with the two flutes playing harmonics in registers that are similar. The piccolo plays a B note an octave higher than written, and therefore matches the register of the pitches played by the two flutes. This piccolo entry is a delicate moment, as the piccolo plays a regular pitch which represents the real, while the flutes play harmonics which represent the fantasy. The piccolo entry furthermore creates a moment of cluster with the flutes, as pitches in the three parts vertically form intervals of thirds with one another. After the piccolo entrance, the lines then disappear quickly as residual sound, and is meant to suggest the image of a snowflake falling abruptly from the sky to land on the floor and dissipates quickly upon contact with the heat of the ground.



Example 5.9 *Snow Country*, smorzando, bars 6-8

This above example 5.9 is another example of combining horizontality and verticality together, although in a slightly different way. Here the writing relies on a single horizontally unfolding pitch, while creating verticality through the detailed variance in dynamics in order to create a sound effect go “stacking” of sonorities.

The image shows a multi-staff musical score for a brass section. The staves are labeled: Hrn. 1, Hrn. 2, Hrn. 3, Hrn. 4, Tpt. 1, Tpt. 2, Tpt. 3, Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, B. Tbn., and Tbn. The score features a 'stretto' entry where each instrument line begins with a rest, followed by a note. The notes are marked 'Air sound (no pitch)'. The dynamics range from *pp* to *f*. The section is marked 'senza sord.' (without mutes). The notes are sustained, creating a 'breathiness' effect.

Example 5.10 *Snow Country*, air sound, bars 24-26

In the above example 5.10, a larger texture of the brass section uses the technique of stretto entry of individual lines in order to create the aggregate effect of “breathiness” - as indicated by the performance marking “breathy sound”. The imitation of movement of air is the commonality which connects all the individual lines, especially in the many lines of a higher register shifting rapidly in movement of dynamics.

54 $\text{♩} = 52$

Pic.

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

Hn. 4

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

B. Tbn.

Tbn.

Tim.

Viol.

Glock.

Cym.

Example 5.11 *Snow Country*, woodwind, brass and percussion, bars 54-58

In example 5.11, the imitation of movement of air is also an important musical element, although the sound effect is used in the domain of texture. In this section, the entire brass section uses the harmon mute, in order to subdue the sound and so as to allow the brass sound to weave more seamlessly with the rest of the orchestra. In example 5.11 each group of instruments creates a distinct energy of sound, and within the same space and time two distinct energies of sound clash and create a sense of duality. In terms of pitch material, the two groups stacked vertically would form minor second or augmented fourth intervals, as the two groups are closely linked with one another through intervallic principles.

55

Flute 1

Flute 2

Oboe 1

Vibraphone

Glockenspiel

Crotales

Example 5.12 *Snow Country*, woodwind and brass, bar 54

In the above example, there is a chromatic relationship between the woodwind and the percussion section. The first pitch is followed by an ascending or descending semitone to form a question-and-answer relationship. Vertically the effect is that of a block of tones splitting apart. Horizontally it still satisfies the chromatic harmonic connection.

118

Picc.

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Example 5.13 *Snow Country*, woodwind, bars 118-121

This score example quotes from the section of the music forming the climax, which features the textural movement of the woodwinds as a whole. In this section, each woodwind instrument derives its pitch from a core harmony, to create textural interest sustaining a sound through texture, which allows for movement without shifting the quality of sound in a rapid way.

----- ♩ = 110

Example 5.14 *Snow Country*, woodwind, bar 10

The motive of the whole woodwinds at bar 10 is central to the development of the woodwind material in the final section of this work, accompanying the continuous ascending scale of the strings together with a background color for the brass melody.

H Allegro ♩ = 132

113

Example 5.15 *Snow Country*, woodwind, bars 113-115

As can be seen above, the woodwinds in the last section unfold allowing the fixed harmonic patterns to flow in different sequences of time entry, thus making the

harmonies relatively ambiguous and more spatial and layered.

The image shows a complex woodwind score for 'Snow Country' starting at bar 113. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' with a quarter note equal to 132. The score includes parts for Piccolo, Flute 1 and 2, Oboe 1 and 2, Clarinet 1 and 2, and Bassoon 1 and 2. The music is characterized by intricate rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and frequent use of dynamic markings such as *f*, *ff*, *mf*, and *mp*. The score is annotated with 'repeat' signs and arrows indicating the development and variation of motifs across the different instruments.

Example 5.16 *Snow Country*, woodwind, bars 115-119

In example 5.16 the variation and development of motives unfold in all woodwind instruments. The combination of this and the sustained ascending scaling of the strings below are used to push the music to its climax.

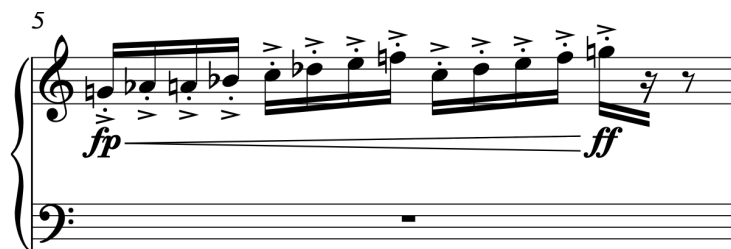
Scale pedal as a moving texture:

The image displays a string score for 'Snow Country' from bars 113 to 115. It features parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabasso (Cb.). The texture is a dense 'scale pedal' where all instruments play a continuous, repetitive sixteenth-note scale. The dynamics are consistently marked as *fp* (fortissimo piano), creating a claustrophobic and intense sound.

Example 5.17 *Snow Country*, strings, bars 113-115

The example 5.17 contrasts the previous score example by demonstrating another approach to textural organization. Rather than giving instruments breathing room, in this particular section, a sense of claustrophobia is created. Since the string lines are playing a pedal from a single scale fragment, this repetitiveness can be interpreted as

stillness, which contrasts starkly to the movement created in the section of music indicated by the previous score example.



Example 5.18 *Snow Country*, scale, bar 113

This is a pattern of ascending progressive scales with a few colour changes from one octave to the next. The entire string section repeats the scale in sequence and is accompanied by a tendency to move from soft to strong, creating a feeling of unstoppable momentum.

Beyond the contrast between stillness and motion, or merging of the real and the fantasy, some instruments are also able to demonstrate drama through usage of instrument specific techniques in order to evoke the scenes of wind and snow.

♩ = 110

Example 5.19 *Snow Country*, woodwind, bar 10

In this example 5.19 the Glockenspiel mallet used is a metal mallet. The use of a metal mallet in a scratching technique accompanies the woodwind section in the rising movement of harmonic colour and gives the music a shimmering and metallic quality. In this moment of musical dissonance, the Glockenspiel extended technique gives the music an additional layer of colour.

Scratch the string from top to bottom with guitar pluger

Harp

D \sharp C \flat B \flat E \flat F \flat G \sharp A \sharp

l.v. (sempre)

f

Example 5.20 *Snow Country*, harp, bars 1-2

A similar scraping sonority is achieved in the harp. The instructions tell the harpist to scratch the harp strings from top to bottom with a guitar pick infusing the music with a metallic feeling. Static noise is an important element of 20th century music and is an important innovation. That has influenced my orchestrational approach.

glissando the low A string with guitar pick

fff

And.

Example 5.21 *Snow Country*, piano, bars 33-34

In this example 5.21, a similar extended technique is applied to the piano, which gives the music a similar feeling to create a loud resonance.

Wire brush, brush horizontally

single brush stroke

mp

mf

f

Example 5.22 *Snow Country*, timpani, bars 2-4

In this example 5.22, a wire brush creates another type of static noise on the timpani, to add an element of mystery to the musical picture and expands the expressive colors of both the instrument and its function within the orchestra.

139 **J** = 42

Example 5.23 *Snow Country*, chord, bars 139-143

In example 5.23 is shown a combination of two groups of pitches and each group is a semitone relationship between the first note and the second note.

This score example captures the loudest moment of the entire piece, as well as its dramatic and narrative climax, and is meant to symbolise the powerful imagery of snow and wind at its most turbulent. The simple rhythmic shape adds to the unity the orchestra at this point of the music and increases its climactic power. The rhythm of this section is inspiring by a similar climactic section of another work of mine, *Sail to the South*, which features a Sheng solo in an effective rhythmic motif. This motif applied to this piece is development in the orchestra as a building of collective tension, and in performance, to create an impactful musical movement of a flurry of snow and wind at an emotionally outpouring moment of tragedy.

Chapter 6 The birth of the modern composer

In 2019, I was honored to be selected to participate in the *Qigang Chen's* Composition Workshop. Discussions included the relationship between contemporary Chinese music and world music, how young contemporary Chinese composers seek a musical language, and whether Western compositional techniques should be fully borrowed and transplanted into traditional music. We discussed how acceptance of contemporary music has not yet reached the same level of tolerance and diversity as in the United States, Europe, and other Western countries. Two other participants, *Jue Wang* and *Lanqing Ding*, and I came up with an idea of a comedic satire on the current predicament of contemporary Chinese composers. The text of the story came from a short story that we created during the workshop, with me eventually completing the text of the story. We wanted to find an idea of a comic opera that satirizes the current predicament we find ourselves in as composers.

The text structure of the opera is divided into two main parts. The first part tells how *Nicholas Zhou* unexpectedly started on the path of contemporary music through the chance of a concert, and the second part tells the comical scene in which, after many years, *Nicholas Zhou* has become a famous composer and holds concerts.

<p>The first scene</p>	<p>A famous composer is preparing for a special concert. Before the performance, it is suddenly discovered that the musician has not come for some reason, so the composer's assistant pulls in a young man at the door to perform as a musician on the spot. The young man is encouraged by his assistant and the composer to perform the composer's work in a confused manner.</p>	<p>The orchestra is mainly polyphonic and improvised.</p>
<p>The second scene</p>	<p>A few years later, the young man who sang on stage has become a famous composer. It is funny that the musician who was to perform at his special concert still did not come, and that fate played tricks on the impostor in the same way. He</p>	<p>The orchestra is mainly accompaniment</p>

	becomes the most isolated person on stage. The concert had to be awkwardly retired to the taunts of the audience.	
--	---	--

Table 3 The content of scene

Vocal writing:

One source of inspiration for my opera was the Beijing opera *The Deep Night*, in which the orchestra accompaniment and melodies are often repeated or developed in contrast with slight variations in repetition.

The image shows a musical score in 2/4 time, divided into seven phrases labeled A through G. Each phrase is enclosed in a box. Annotations include: 'expand one beat' for phrases C and G; 'delay the main pitch' for phrase E; 'expansion the duration and repetition' for phrase G; and 'narrow the duration and repetition' for phrase F. The score consists of seven staves of music, with measure numbers 6, 11, 16, 20, 24, and 31 indicated at the beginning of their respective phrases.

Example 6.1 *The Deep Night*, the methods of melody

The above example is a well-known melody from the Peking Opera *the Deep Night*. Analysis of the melody reveals that there is a repetition between A, B, and C. In E there is a delay to the arrival at the end of the phase. F and G are a little more complex than all the previous ones, and G is even more expanded, reduced, and developed to an independent phrase, rather than just a motive like F. For me, this approach seems quite similar to that of the development of motives by composers in classical music.

Another source for the chamber opera is Qiang folk song, and it is easy to see the similarities between the way of development with *the deep night* above.

丰收之歌
The song of harvest

羌族民歌
qiang folk song

Example 6.2 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*, motivation of ‘The song of harvest’

Qiang songs and dances are repetitive in pitch and melody, without great variation, or are performed with little variation and in a gradual manner. The songs are raw, pure, and rugged.

I was inspired by these sources and how they take orderly material and change it in a repetitive process. It begins with two sixteenth notes, the first repetition in the two octaves higher, and the third repetition occurs in the second bar. The fourth occurrence becomes rhythmically a triplet played one octave higher combined with two sixteenth notes, and the fifth occurrence is a triplet in two octaves higher. The sixth occurrence is a repetition without rests and an original motive in two octaves higher. The purpose of this is to maximize the development of the material in the same musical mood, thus allowing for the continuous development and unity of the dramatic effect.

Example 6.3 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*, strings, bars 355-357

The image shows a musical score for 'The Birth of the Modern Composer' from bars 158-159. The score includes a vocal line (S.) and five instrumental lines (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Db.). The vocal line has the lyrics '鬼名字' (Ghost Name) under a 'ff' dynamic marking. The instrumental parts also feature 'ff' dynamics and 'pizz' markings. A large bracket groups the instrumental parts with the instruction 'Speak and Stomp'.

Example 6.4 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*, 'the ghost name' bars 158-159

The lyrics here are to the effect that *Nicholas Zhou* is curious to hear the composer's name and asks, "what the hell kind of name is", and the band players say "the ghost name" together so that the sudden appearance of the vocals has an instant comic dramatic effect and serves as a response to the dramatic tension, which can have a surprisingly mocking effect in the development of the play. The protagonist is not believing that they will organize a concert. He gradually believes and becomes a tenor. The phrase is meant to express both the questioning of the composer's concert and also the turning point in the action behavior of the protagonist after the opening of the opera. Through this fortuitous experience of singing contemporary music on stage, he eventually became an impostor composer and was to give his own concerts in a few years later.

Improvisation:

The image shows a musical score for an improvisation section. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = 90$. The score includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Pno.), Saxophone (S.), Trumpet (T.), Baritone (Bar.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Via.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Dbs.). The score is divided into three numbered boxes (1, 2, 3) for improvisation. Box 1 is marked mp and f . Box 2 is marked ff and mp . Box 3 is marked ff and mp . The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A Chinese instruction is present: 演奏者按方块中顺序并用方块中相似的材料（和声和轮廓）即兴演奏 (improvise using the materials (both in terms of their harmonic colours and pitch contours) given in Boxes 1,2 and 3). The English translation of this instruction is also provided below the Chinese text.

Example 6.5 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*, improvisation bars 300-301

The use of improvisation: Firstly, this is in line with the development of the plot. *Nicholas Zhou* mistakenly believes himself to be a genius at singing contemporary music and the improvisation is played in a way that fits this comic, manic, and progressive comic effect. Improvisation is also present in the chamber music *Sail to the South, Alone Sail Alone Shadow*, which are a consistent creative feature of my work. Improvisation is at a dramatic climax in the structure of the opera. Finally, improvisation does not limit the way the actors perform, and it can offer more possibilities for the stage. We do not have too much rehearsal time during the workshop, which requires a more approach of improvisational drama to train actors. For the theatrical effect, improvised and intense music can reduce the psychological burden of the actors and pressure, thus allowing them to concentrate more on the stage.

Example 6.6 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*, improvisation bars 307-309

The beginning part of the improvisation is similar to my other two works. They are all starting with different materials, but the difference is that the end of the improvisation is finished by the order of different instruments to enter the next part of the music, instead of all ends together. This approach will allow the climax of the music to make a good connection with the next part without making the development of the music seem abrupt. The story begins with the female assistant singing while playing the piano, while the male protagonist sings to the rhythm of the piano. As the protagonist is not professionally trained, his singing is completely out of tune and creates a comic effect at the end of the song. However, he feels he is a genius destined to become an artist. At the end of the story, the composer suddenly calls out to Nicolas Zhou and his female assistant. He believes the protagonist is very well-trained and perfectly capable of performing. In terms of musical effect, the improvisation is arranged by superimposing from one instrument to another, thus allowing the intensity of the sound to develop and grow gradually. In the arrangement of the musical material, the improvisations are longer in motivation, more selective, and more dramatically tense. This is a marked difference from the simple development of motives in my other chamber music works. In contrast to the improvisations in my other works, this piece ends with a gradually diminishing performance by each instrument, rather than a powerful conclusion with the conductor. The composer's words are directly involved in *Nicolas Zhou* and the female assistant's performance and keep the story moving. From

this point on, the music must be played continuously, which helps the integrity of the narrative.

As there are only three soloists in the opera without a chorus, I try to imitate the singing of the chorus by using the vocal effects of the orchestra players. The way in which it echoes the soloists assists the comic and dramatic tension. The use of foot-stomping is meant to give a better comic effect in the performance.

The image shows a musical score for Example 6.7, titled 'The Birth of the Modern Composer', covering stomping bars 158-159. The score includes parts for Soprano (S.), Tenor (T.), Baritone (Bar.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.). The vocal parts (S., T., Bar.) are mostly silent, with the Tenor part having a few notes and the lyrics '鬼名字' (Guǐ míng zì) written below. The instrumental parts (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Db.) are marked with 'pizz' (pizzicato) and 'ff' (fortissimo). A large annotation 'Speak and Stomp' is written above the instrumental parts, with a large '2' and '4' indicating the number of stumps. The lyrics '鬼名字' are written below the instrumental parts, indicating the words being stomped.

Example 6.7 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*, stomping bars 158-159

Lyrics with similar meanings are used in an ascending scale to emphasize the urgency of the characters' tone. For example, the eagerness of the protagonist when he knows that he will be paid a lot for performing a concert. The protagonist asks, 'two thousand, three thousand, or four thousand dollars'. The lyrics are sung in progressively shorter phrases to reflect the dramatic effect of the protagonist's impatience. The pause between each lyric is gradually narrowing.

The image shows a musical score for Example 6.8, titled 'The Birth of the Modern Composer', showing the protagonist's lyrics in an ascending scale. The score is in bass clef and includes the lyrics '两千五' (liǎng qiān wǔ), '三千' (sān qiān), and '四千' (sì qiān). The lyrics are written below the notes, and the dynamic markings 'mp', 'mf', and 'f' are written above the notes, indicating the increasing intensity of the protagonist's tone.

Example 6.8 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*, the protagonist bars 313-315

Pitch materials:

The pitch material in this work often uses the method of cluster transposition, as shown in the following example:

The image shows a musical score for Example 6.9, 'The Birth of the Modern Composer', harmony bars 16-18. It features three woodwind parts (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet) and three string parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola). The woodwind parts are marked with 'Smorzando (accent breath)' and dynamic markings: *pp*, *mp*, *p*, *mf*, and *ff*. The string parts are marked with *ff*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

The image shows a single musical staff illustrating a chromatic cluster transposition. The notes are grouped into a cluster, and the entire cluster is transposed by a semitone.

Example 6.9 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*, harmony bars 16-18

The orchestration of bars 16 to 18 is transferred from woodwind to strings, and the pitch material is transposed by a semitone. In the accompaniment texture of the whole work, strings use a lot of clusters, and the method of repetition or transposition makes the music material get a balance of unity and change. For example, the chromatic pitch material, the design of the voice singing, the repetition and variation of the material, and the treatment of the end of improvisation. The most important is the reflection and creation based on traditional music.

This piece is influenced by traditional music in a way that is very different from my other works because of the similarity of the instrumental accompaniment to traditional music ensembles.

The image shows a musical score for Example 7.0, 'Joyful', featuring traditional Chinese instruments. The score includes parts for Pipa (扬琴), Guqin (琵琶), Qin (秦琴), Zhongyu (中阮), and Dajiao (大扬琴). The title '喜悦如歌' (Joyful as Song) is written above the score. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 7.0 Joyful

This is a fragment of a typical folk music ensemble piece *Joyful*, in which it is easy to see that rhythm is very simple. The top instrument is a bamboo flute solo, and below it is the accompaniment of four traditional plucked instruments, the second and third of which play counter melodies, while the two bass instruments give bass and accompaniment patterns. This rhythmically simple accompaniment pattern is almost ubiquitous in traditional instrumental ensembles. The Opera draws on this stylistic manner in order to avoid the confrontation of overly complex musical textures with the language of the characters and allows for a more expressive space for the actors on the stage.

The musical score for Example 7.1 consists of six staves. The top staff is a vocal line in bass clef with the lyrics '敢 紧 给 我' (Dǎn jǐn gěi wǒ) and a *fff* dynamic marking. The second staff is a treble clef staff with an 'arco' marking and a *fff* dynamic marking. The third, fourth, fifth, and sixth staves are bass clef staves, each with an 'arco' marking and a *fff* dynamic marking. The accompaniment consists of a simple, rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests, mirroring the vocal line's rhythm.

Example 7.1 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*, echoing the relationship between solo and accompaniment bar 75

The string accompaniment in the above example creates an echoing relationship with the soloist, adding tension and a dramatic effect to the vocals.

The musical score for Example 7.2 shows three staves for string instruments: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), and Viola (Vla.). Each staff begins with a *ff* dynamic marking. The Violin I and II parts play a melodic line with eighth notes and rests, while the Viola part plays a rhythmic accompaniment pattern of eighth notes and rests, mirroring the vocal line in Example 7.1.

Example 7.2 *The birth of the modern composer*, monotony texture, bars 18-19

The above example is a more obvious form of accompaniment created by traditional instruments. However, as too much use would lead to too much monotony, and in order to affect the dramatic expression, it is combined in many places with a complex texture, which is an attempt to break away from the traditional way of writing the texture for ensembles.

Example 7.3 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*; monotony texture with complex texture, bars 54-55

Compared to the previous examples, the above is more complex. The woodwinds play a simpler texture while the strings use slide and motive repetition that is meant to convey the nervous tension of the characters and set an exaggerated and ironic tone for the piece.

Orchestration:

The final section of the work uses patterns to reach a climax through repetition. The simplicity of which is the most characteristic feature of this folk song.

The image displays a musical score for Example 7.4, showing orchestration for various instruments. The score is divided into two main sections. The upper section, starting at measure 377, features a complex orchestration with multiple staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Piano (Pno.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Double Bass (Db.). The piano part includes a vocal line with lyrics in Chinese: "回来，给你加钱，快回来！" and "(说完，向门口跑去！)". The lower section, starting at measure 101, focuses on the Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), and Viola (Vla.). The score includes dynamic markings such as *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*, and *pp*, as well as performance instructions like "回来，给你加钱，快回来！" and "(说完，向门口跑去！)".

Example 7.4 *The Birth of the Modern Composer*, repetition bars 101-110

In terms of orchestration, repetition can be applied to different forms of texture. The oboe and second violins in the above example play trills and chromatic motives, while the chromatic melodic motif changes from the flute to the first violin. The clarinet's descending chromatic motive and slap-tongue technique change into a leaping accompaniment for the viola. In this way, the viola becomes a better accompaniment to the orchestra, without interfering with the first and second violins, to create greater contrast and fuller sound.

Chapter 7 The Other Pieces

In *the Five Ink Painting of Northern*, the piano melody is taken from the folk songs of Northeast China. The piece uses the folk song directly and adds some discordant or colorful harmonies to enrich the sound. But the main theme of the piece still retains the original characteristics of the folk song, such as the fragment of Arirang:



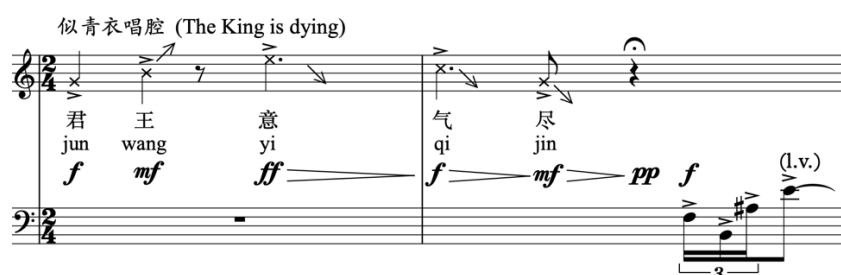
Example 8.1 *Arirang*, the piano part, bars 5-7

In terms of the traditional solo instrument:

The Forgotten String combines the imaginary sound of the ancient instrument with classic literary story.

The story is an ancient tragedy called *Ba-Wang-Bie-Ji*. The story tells the parting of the princess and the king before they died. The melody and harmony of the piece break away from the traditional pentatonic scale, showing a more modern character. It makes a bold melody, harmony, and performance breakthrough, and adds vocals to achieve new dramatic effects.

似青衣唱腔 (The King is dying)



君	王	意	气	尽
jun	wang	yi	qi	jin
<i>f</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>ff</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>mf</i>

pp *f* (l.v.)

Example 8.2 *The Forgotten Strings*, the vocal with pipa solo, bars 153-154

At the end of *Totem*, the violin solo is the Mongolian folk song *Hong-yan*, with the aim of bridging contemporary music-making with traditional music, in addition to returning the contemporary music to tonal music. Tonal music and atonal music should be two perspectives of musical expression rather than two opposites.

Solo espressivo

mf *ff* *mf* *p*

Example 8.3 *Totem*, the melody of violin, bars 108-111

Conclusion

In this commentary I have discussed the influences that ethnic folk music and traditional Chinese music has on the various aspects of my compositions. I have explored the different possibilities in applying traditional Chinese musical elements in my compositional process, and the implications of such a process to the wider field of music composition. My portfolio documents my search for musical identity as a composer.

After more than five years of postgraduate and doctoral studies in the UK. I have gradually found my creative method of drawing from traditional Chinese music and dialectically looking at the aesthetics of Western contemporary music composition.

Overall, my work focuses on the intersection between research into Chinese musical traditions and the creative process of musical composition. I find a great deal of encouragement in this, and it inspires me to persevere with my current work.

In my commentary, I have also attempted to address some of the issues that contemporary Chinese composers have to face in repositioning themselves and in studying contemporary music composition in the West after being educated in their own ethnic music. Intelligent orchestration and sensitivity to the fluidity of texture is a significant challenge to overcome in the creation of a modern work that aims to utilise traditional instrumental sounds to its fullest extent.

My doctoral studies have been essential to my journey as a composer, and throughout my studies I am constantly inspired to reach for the stars and strive to create works that attempt to match the creations of giants who precede me. I am grateful for my time at Cardiff University and look forward further opportunities to develop my composition.

Bibliography

Books and Articles:

Atsuko, Tsukamoto, 'The Music of Tibetan Buddhism in Ladakh: The Musical Structure of Tibetan Buddhist Chant in the Ritual Bskañ-Gso of the Dge-Lugs-Pa Sect', *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, vol. 15, (1983), pp. 126–40

Carole, Pegg, 'Mongolian Conceptualizations of Overtone Singing (Xöömii)', *British Journal of Ethnomusicology*, vol. 1, (1992), pp. 31–54

Chen, Huai, 'Aftermath of the Wenchuan Earthquake', *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, vol. 7, no. 2, (2009), pp. 72–72

Colin, Mackerras, 'Chinese Opera after the Cultural Revolution (1970-72)', *The China Quarterly*, no. 55, (1973), pp. 478–510

Colin, Mackerras, 'Peking Opera before the Twentieth Century', *Comparative Drama*, vol. 28, no. 1, (1994), pp. 19–42

Colin, Mackerras, 'Traditional Mongolian Performing Arts in Inner Mongolia', *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 10, (1983), pp. 17–38

Crossley, 'Pamela Kyle Orphan Warriours': *Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World*, Princeton University Press, (1990), pp. 107–253

Curtis Roads, 'Early Electronic Music Instruments: Timeline 1899-1950', *Computer Music Journal*, vol. 20, no. 3, (1996), pp. 20–23

D.O. Chaoke , Wang Lizhen, [鄂温克族宗教信仰与文化] Beijing, Minzu University of China Press, (2002)

Davies, Gorla, 'Lu Xun's Revolution': *Writing in a Time of Violence*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, (2013)

Davis, Edward, 'Encyclopedia of Contemporary Chinese Culture', *Taylor & Francis*, (2004), pp. 135–267

Francisco, Kröpfl, 'Electronic Music: From Analog Control to Computers', *Computer Music Journal*, vol. 21, no. 1, (1997), pp. 26–28

G, Balanchine 'The Dance Element in Stravinsky's Music', *The Opera Quarterly*, (2006), pp.138-143

Gary, Garritan, 'World Instrument Collection', *ARIA Engine*. (2002), pp.105

Gong, Xiaoting, *Shuxi Zhong De Jingqi — Chenyi Hunhe Shineiyue Chuangzuo Yanjiu* [熟悉中的惊奇—陈怡混合室内乐创作研究: *Familiar but Surprising — A Study on Chen Yi's Mixed Chamber Compositions*] (Beijing: Central Conservatory of Music Press, 2013)

Halson, Elizabeth, 'Peking Opera': *A Short Guide*. Oxford University Press, (1968), pp.54

Hsu, Cho-yun, 'The Spring and Autumn Period', 'The Cambridge history of ancient China': *from the origins of civilization to 221 BC*, Cambridge University Press, (2000)
Jing, Jiang, 'The Influence of Traditional Chinese Music on Professional Instrumental Composition', *Asian Music*, vol. 22, no. 2, (1991), pp. 83–96

Joshua Barone, 'Asian Composers Reflect on Careers in Western Classical Music'. *The New York Times*, (2002)

Joshua, Goldstein, 'Drama Kings': *Players and Publics in the Re-Creation of Peking Opera 1870-1937*, the University of California Press, (2007)

Karl, Hirano, 'A Review of Electronic Music Instruments', *Computer Music Journal*, vol. 20, no. 3, (1996), pp. 28–30

Karlheinz, Stockhausen, 'The Origins of Electronic Music', *The Musical Times*, vol. 112, no. 1541, (1971), pp. 649–50

Lajos, Vargyas, 'Performing Styles in Mongolian Chant', *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, vol. 20, (1968), pp. 70–72

Larry, Sitsky, 'Music of the Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde' Greenwood Publishing, (2002), pp.256

Lau, Frederick, 'When a Great Nation Emerges: Chinese Music in the World', *China and the West: Music, Representation, and Reception*, edited by Hon-Lun Yang and Michael Saffle, the University of Michigan Press, (2017), pp. 265–82

Law, Wing-Wah and Wai-Chung Ho, 'Music Education in China: In Search of Social Harmony and Chinese Nationalism', *British Journal of Music Education*, 28.3 (2011), pp. 371–88

Lee, Yuan-Yuan and Shen, Sinyan, 'Chinese Musical Instruments' (Chinese Music Monograph Series), Chinese Music Society of North America Press, (1999), pp.56-143
Lowell, Cross, 'Electronic Music, 1948-1953', *Perspectives of New Music*, vol. 7, no. 1, (1968), pp. 32–65

Michael, Klein, 'Texture, Register, and Their Formal Roles in the Music of Witold Lutosławski', *Indiana Theory Review*, vol. 20, no. 1, (1999), pp. 37–70

Paul, Greene, 'Buddhism and the Musical Cultures of Asia: An Annotated Discography', *Asian Music*, vol. 35, no. 2, (2004), pp. 133–74

Peter, Crossley-Holland, 'The State of Research in Tibetan Folk Music', *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 11, no. 2, (1967), pp. 170–87

Phil, Rose, 'Singing the Syllables: Translating Spelling into Music in Tibetan Spelling Chant', *Sounds in Translation: Intersections of Music, Technology and Society*, edited by Amy Chan and Alistair Noble, ANU Press, (2009), pp. 145–68

Rao, Nancy Yunhwa, 'Chinese Opera Percussion from Model Opera to Tan Dun', *China and the West: Music, Representation, and Reception*, edited by Hon-Lun Yang and Michael Saffle, the University of Michigan Press, (2017), pp. 163–85

Trân, Van Khê, 'Chinese Music and Musical Traditions of Eastern Asia', *The World of Music*, vol. 27, no. 1, (1985), pp. 78–90

Vega, Aurelio, 'Regarding Electronic Music', *Tempo*, no. 75, (1965), pp. 2–11

Wang, Ke, 'Between the Ummah and China': *The Qing Dynasty's Rule over Xinjiang Uyghur Society* *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, Kobe University Press, pp.57-87

Wang, Min, 'The Musical and Cultural Meanings of Shandong Guchuiyue from the People's Republic of China'. Kent, Ohio, Kent State University Press, (2014)

Whittall, Arnold, 'Britten and Lutosławski: Taming the 20th-Century Avant-Garde', *The Musical Times*, vol. 154, (2013), pp. 3–19

Wu, Ben, 'Music Scholarship, West and East: Tibetan Music as a Case Study', *Asian Music*, vol. 29, no. 2, (1998), pp. 31–56

Yao, Hai-Hsing, 'The Relationship between Percussive Music and the Movement of Actors in Peking Opera', *Asian Music*, vol. 21, no. 2, (1990), pp. 39–70

Scores:

Chen, Yi, *Happy Rain on a Spring Night* (USA: Chen Yi, 2004)

Chen, Yi, *Spring Dreams*, ((USA: Chen Yi, 1999)

Chen, Yi, *Spring Rain*, (USA: Chen Yi, 2011)

Sheng, Bright, *China Dreams* (New York, NY: G. Schirmer; Milwaukee: Distributed by Hal Leonard, 2001)

Zhou, long, *The Future of Fire* (London, Oxford University Press, 1985)

Zhou, long, *Da Qu* (London, Oxford University Press, 2001)

Recording and Documentaries:

György Ligeti, Grammophon/Universal Classics 477 6443-477 6447, *Clear or Cloudy*, Deutsche Compact disc 4 sound discs, digital, stereo, 4¾ in. Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon