

CHOPIN UNIVERSITY OF MUSIC

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**An Analysis of Performance Aspects of European and Chinese
French Horn Music of the 20th Century in the Context of
Differences and Similarities Based on Representative Repertoire**

description of the artistic work

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Introduction.

Many people have already conducted in-depth studies on 20th-century music, with a wide range of research directions. Some focus on the significance of the emergence of atonal music, while others delve into the compositional methods and creative patterns of 20th-century new music. However, studies based on horn performance in the context of 20th-century music are relatively rare. I hope that my dissertation can serve as a supplement and boost to research in this area.

During my master's studies, I studied under Prof. Saar Berger at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik Trossingen in Germany. He has profound accomplishments in the performance of 20th-century music and once worked with the Ensemble Modern in Germany, a very high-level contemporary music performance group. During the two years I studied with him, I was exposed to many 20th-century horn works and gradually developed a strong interest in them. After careful study, I also mastered many of the intricacies involved. Therefore, in my doctoral dissertation, I would like to deepen my professional research in this area further, building upon the performance-based focus of my master's period by delving more into theoretical knowledge. For this, I am very grateful to ad. dr hab. Tomasz Bińkowski for his guidance, advice, and help.

As a Chinese music student, while growing up with a love for Mozart and Chopin's music, I also developed a deep interest in the beautiful melodies and unique compositional styles of traditional Chinese music, especially those of some Chinese composers in the 20th century. While experiencing the suffering of war, they, like Chopin, harbored a strong patriotic passion and deeply infused it into their musical creations. Some of these works are ones I have frequently heard at symphonic concerts in my hometown since I was a child. I have also accumulated a wealth of experience in studying these works during my undergraduate studies.

My undergraduate Conservatory, the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, is one of the highest-level and most renowned professional music academies in China. It is also the oldest music conservatory in China, founded in the early 20th century in 1927. During my four years of undergraduate study, I participated in many concerts of 20th-century Chinese music works and toured in major cities throughout China. These included not only symphonic works but also Chinese operas. Through collaborations with many conductors who specialize in interpreting Chinese music, I learned a great deal about 20th-century Chinese music, including performance aspects.

Due to historical factors, the earliest introduction of symphonic music into China occurred at the end of the 19th century. Before that, Chinese music mainly featured traditional Chinese instruments, often in solo or small chamber ensembles, without the large-scale symphonic formats. Therefore, if one wants to compare Chinese and European horn-related music, the most valuable comparison lies in 20th-century music—there are not many other options. Thus, most of China's symphonic music works were also composed in the 20th century, evolving along with the country's development.

It is worth mentioning that, because the horn was introduced into China quite late and is not a very popular instrument in China, there are very few composers who have

written works specifically for the horn. Works with high artistic value are even rarer. This dissertation will focus on studying 20th-century Chinese art songs that have been adapted by outstanding Chinese horn players such as Prof. Quan Wen of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. Due to the horn's unique singing quality and its strength in performing lyrical lines in a symphony orchestra, these pieces are very suitable for horn performance and yield excellent effects, making them suitable as repertoire for horn study. These works are also highly representative and artistically valuable, and are frequently performed as important horn solo pieces in various concerts in China.

In summary, the direction of my research is one that very few have undertaken, but is at the same time extremely important and innovative. Fortunately, it is also my area of expertise, thanks to my educational background and years of study in prestigious music academies in both China and Germany. European horn players often find it difficult to gain a clear understanding of what happened in Chinese music in the 20th century, while horn students who have studied only in China may sometimes lack a deep understanding of European 20th-century music. I hope that this dissertation, written based on my knowledge and experience, will enable people to better express the rich melodies of 20th-century composers through the wonderful instrument of the horn, and to better understand these works, to interpret them more perfectly.

I hope that my completed dissertation will be beneficial to the young horn students in both China and Europe. It will give them a more comprehensive and clear understanding of 20th-century music in the world, thereby fulfilling an educational purpose—helping them progress and promote the advancement and development of horn performance in both countries. I hope that my dissertation can serve as a helpful tool for horn players, contributing to the exchange of musical culture between East and West, allowing musicians from both cultural spheres to become more familiar with each other's outstanding works. I also hope that my research can raise the international profile and influence of Chinese horn works, allowing more horn players around the world to become acquainted with the beautiful melodies and cultural richness of this ancient Eastern country, and thus contribute to elevating the international status of Chinese music.

The works I am researching span the entire 20th century—it's like traveling through 100 years through music, and that is a very exciting thing. I will guide readers to discover the positive presence of the horn under this theme, and will also integrate the professional knowledge I have accumulated over the years to engage in a deeper reflection on the styles and performance methods of 20th-century works.

Chapter 1.

The background and rationale for writing the dissertation.

In my opinion, among all the stages of horn music creation, the 20th century is the most complex and fascinating, filled with great legendary stories—scandals, revolutions, conspiracies, desires, greed, ambition, and shattered dreams. From pre-World War I Vienna to 20th-century Paris, from Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia to downtown New York in the 1960s and 70s, composers of this era experienced various political and cultural shocks. These major historical events, which influenced the course of world history, also had an indelible impact on the world of music.

During the 100 years of the 20th century, human society experienced unprecedented turbulence and the rapid development of science and technology, connecting billions of people around the globe. At the same time, conflicts between individuals, nations, and states became more intense than ever before. As a result, cultural and artistic exchanges and clashes between countries increased significantly. Amidst the tide of the times, some people declared with hope that humanity had achieved unprecedented progress, while others cried out in despair or lamented the loss of past glories. In the art world, modern art rose rapidly, giving birth to an explosion of genres and styles, most of which were quickly eliminated, with only a few surviving.

The two world wars of the 20th century swept the globe and reshaped the world order. Both Poland and China suffered immense disasters and trauma during the wars, and their people displayed great patriotism in striving for their nations' futures. This was strongly reflected in literary and artistic works. The great changes in the world during the 20th century had a profound impact on human society, people's lives, and the development of musical art. This is a history worth exploring and reflecting on. It also enriched the content of horn music works, pushing horn music to an unprecedented peak.

The diversity and richness of 20th-century horn compositions make them an important component of 20th-century music and a brilliant jewel in the history of music development. Like other art forms, 20th-century horn compositions were influenced by society, politics, economic developments, and the emergence of numerous ideological trends. As a result, they display a variety of complex and distinctive features. These genres of thought emerged one after another, emphasizing individuality, which not only promoted the development of horn art but also stimulated innovation and prosperity in the broader field of culture and the arts.

Although the task of my doctoral dissertation is to study the development of horn performance in the specific context of the 20th century, it is unrealistic to comprehensively cover all horn-related music from the entire century. Therefore, I believe it is necessary to select and discuss some representative works. Over the years, many academic studies on the horn have focused on the most famous horn pieces. These works have been thoroughly researched and have significant academic value—I have read many of these studies. However, I hope to make my dissertation more innovative, as research on these well-known composers and pieces is often difficult to surpass. Therefore, in selecting pieces for my CD project, I also prefer to choose works that have

not been extensively discussed. Some composers may not be widely known, yet in my eyes, they are equally remarkable musicians. Thus, I believe a deeper exploration of their work is both necessary and urgent, and will contribute to a more comprehensive body of literature on horn-related music.

The main criteria for selecting these works are their artistic value, their contribution to the development of horn performance techniques, and their significance within the broader context of 20th-century horn music development. The pieces I have studied are all horn works I greatly enjoy and frequently perform in my solo concerts.

Among the works I have chosen to study, the solo horn piece by Werner Pirchner was recommended to me by my professor during my master's studies. This piece is very interesting, full of storytelling and vivid imagery. The original score even includes amusing comic illustrations related to the piece—this was the first time I encountered such fun content in sheet music. My master's professor, Prof. Saar Berger, also made some adaptations to the score to enhance its technical richness. Bernhard Krol's horn piece incorporates stopped horn notes, a very typical 20th-century technique, creating a mysterious and captivating effect. Poulenc's brass chamber music piece was one I performed with my chamber music partners at the Shanghai Symphony Hall—an incredibly joyful concert, not only due to the successful outcome but also because I was on stage with my best friends. This, to me, is the greatest meaning of chamber music—not just the enjoyment of music, but of friendship. We were also fortunate to receive guidance and support from Berlin Philharmonic horn player Stefan de Leval Jezierski on multiple occasions.

I also selected a piece by the well-known German composer Paul Hindemith. Paul Hindemith was a very prominent and representative figure in 20th-century music. He endeavored to write at least one sonata for every orchestral instrument, both as solo and with piano. His Sonata for Horn and Piano, composed in 1939, is part of his wind instrument series and is a typical work of his musical genre. Therefore, his horn piece is also highly valuable for research, as a classic example of 20th-century neoclassical music.

Lars-Erik Larsson's horn piece was the final round repertoire for the 2022 Stuttgart City Music Competition. This piece carries a strong 20th-century style with a distinctly Nordic flavor. Technically demanding, it is very worthy of research. I particularly enjoy its vivid melodic character.

Interestingly, in this doctoral dissertation research, I do not want to limit myself to the knowledge I acquired during my master's studies—I hope to do something pioneering by integrating the music of the 20th century and my homeland. People often say "art has no borders," but under different aesthetic concepts, art still retains its unique flavors. A thousand people will have a thousand interpretations and understandings of art. Eastern and Western societies have different cultural soils and environments: Western aesthetics favor analysis, while Chinese aesthetics favor synthesis. These differences in thought and expression have also led to differences in music. Through analyzing works from these two different cultural fields, I hope to help music learners better understand musical works shaped by different cultures.

Among these, the work I want to focus on is a household patriotic musical masterpiece

in China—"Yellow River Cantata" by composer Xinghai Xian.

There is an old saying in China: "Without the Yellow River, there would be no Chinese people." The Yellow River is the mother river of the Chinese nation, nourishing generations of people. China has two major rivers—the Yangtze and the Yellow Rivers—whose importance in Chinese geography, culture, and history is equivalent to that of the Rhine and Danube in Germany. Just as German composer Wagner's works often feature myths and legends related to the Rhine, Chinese literature abounds with works about the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers. Even in ancient times, classical poetry often featured these river names.

My hometown is Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China—a city very close to the Yellow River, located just north of the city center, about a half-hour drive away. When I was a child, my mother's workplace was near the Yellow River, so every week, my father would drive me to explore and wander by the river. We would drive up the hills near the Yellow River or down near the rapid waters, and I would listen to my family tell stories and the history of the Yellow River. For the child that I was, this was full of mystery and wonder. Of course, we also enjoyed the peaceful and beautiful scenery and breathed in the fresh countryside air. So for me, the scenery and experiences by the Yellow River are deeply imprinted in my memory—they represent joy and beauty with my family and our mother river. The Yellow River is an indelible spiritual memory in my heart, a constant source of longing for my hometown.

"Yellow River Cantata" is the representative piece of its composer Xinghai Xian. In his compositions, Xinghai Xian often writes important horn solos. These passages fully utilize the horn's color and musicality in a symphonic orchestra, bringing the emotional expression of the melody to its peak. Xinghai Xian is almost the most famous Chinese composer of the 20th century, known for his strong patriotism. His works are often presented as representative Chinese music in European concerts. In my view, his life shares many similarities with Chopin—they both infused intense patriotism into every note of their music. Xinghai Xian studied in Paris, and his style was greatly influenced by the European academic tradition. During his time in Europe, he constantly missed his homeland and longed for a better future for China, much like Chopin's yearning for Poland. Before going to France, he studied at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, which is also my alma mater, where I spent four years earning my bachelor's degree, making Xinghai Xian and me alumni across time and space. To commemorate him, Chinese musicians named the conservatory in Guangzhou as Xinghai Conservatory of Music, and the concert hall there as Xinghai Concert Hall. Similarly, the people of Poland named the music university in Warsaw as the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music for the composer. Today, almost every patriotic-themed concert in China features Xinghai Xian's works, reflecting their recognition by the Chinese people and his profound influence on Chinese music.

In addition, pieces like *Kangding Love Song*, *Song of Yangtze River* are classic and beloved works among the Chinese people, known for their beautiful melodies and engaging stories and emotions.

In summary, I have always hoped to conduct in-depth research on these works, and even more so, to allow more European musicians to understand and appreciate these

excellent musical pieces. These 20th-century compositions place high demands on performers in terms of comprehension, knowledge, skill, and method. My many years of studying the horn have required me to dedicate considerable time and effort to exploring how to better perform these 20th-century pieces.

Therefore, I am not only deeply interested in 20th-century music, but I also hope to bridge the world of the horn with the world of 20th-century music. The music of the 20th century is truly captivating; it is not distant from us—it influences our lives and is influenced by our lives, propelling human culture and art toward even greater heights.

Chapter 2.

Influence of the historical context of the 20th century on musical composition and an overview of 20th-century music.

At the end of the 19th century, the path of Romantic music seemed to have reached its end. Wagner's influence was omnipresent, and the heavy pressure inspired a rebellion among the younger generation of musicians, not only against Wagner but against Romanticism itself. They opposed extreme subjectivity and endless exaggeration, as well as the excessive outpouring of emotion and self-deceptive idealism.

By around 1920, Western music had developed two tendencies: one toward enriching musical language, and the other toward innovating musical language. Different aesthetic interpretations of musical composition emerged. Some artists retained the 19th-century view of music as a form of individual expression and regarded their work as a continuation of classical tradition; others, in rebellion against the old world and in pursuit of new music, rejected the expressive function of music. Their works appeared in the form of formalism. Novelty and uniqueness became their criteria for judging music. It is also worth noting that many musicians became aware of the artist's social responsibility and advocated stepping out of the "ivory tower" to write for the broad masses of people. During the years of war, economic depression, and social crises, this tendency became especially evident.

Under the influence of different political and cultural backgrounds and diverse musical ideologies, Western music after the 1920s saw the emergence of numerous genres and varied styles. While summarizing, consolidating, and developing the experimental achievements of the pre-war period, attention was also paid to exploring and utilizing traditional resources.

Nationalism became an even greater trend between the two World Wars. Unlike the 19th century's fusion of national folk vocabulary into Romantic compositions rich in the composer's style, 20th-century nationalist music allowed ancient folk music to coexist with modern professional compositions in a distinctly outlined form. More and more composers realized the need to imbue modern music with new vitality by using folk and foreign music. They not only studied and incorporated music from their nations but also that of other peoples. Non-Western music brought a fresh breeze to the "new music" of the 20th century. At that time, the continuous evolution of creative styles among many Western composers was still clearly observable, as was their tendency to compose both experimental works and those written in traditional or simple, popular styles. The ever-widening gap between profound modern music and the audience became a reality that many composers had to face. Germany and Austria's Krenek, Hindemith, Weill; France's "Les Six"; Britain's Britten; America's Copland; and the Soviet Union's Shostakovich and Prokofiev—all attempted in different ways to change this reality. Around the time of resistance against Nazi rule and the anti-fascist war, almost all righteous musicians—including those who had explicitly opposed any association between art and politics—joined the ranks of those resisting tyranny, defending their homeland, and safeguarding freedom. The works they produced in this context are chapters in 20th-century music that cannot be ignored.

Chapter 3. 20th-century Chinese classical music.

3.1. An overview of the overall situation and musical characteristics of 20th-century Chinese classical music.

The modernization process of Chinese classical music began with the eastward spread of Western music in the late Qing and early Republican period. In 1903, Shikai Yuan's New Army established China's first Western-style military band, marking the formal implantation of the Western music system into the fabric of traditional society.¹ In 1927, propelled by the New Culture Movement, Youmei Xiao founded the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai (now the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, also my alma mater), systematically introducing European composition techniques and educational frameworks. During the 1930s, in the "National Music School" movement led by Zi Huang, works such as *The Song of Everlasting Regret* established early paradigms of "Chinese style" through the sinicization of functional harmony. Under the context of anti-Japanese resistance, music became increasingly politicized: works like *March of the Volunteers* by Er Nie and *Yellow River Cantata* by Xinghai Xian transformed the language of European Romanticism into a sonic weapon for national liberation. This tight coupling of music and politics became a hallmark of 20th-century Chinese music.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, musical creation was incorporated into the framework of socialist cultural construction. In 1956, Zedong Mao's policy of "letting a hundred flowers bloom" led to the birth of the violin concerto *Butterfly Lovers* (Zhanhao He and Gang Chen, 1959, from my alma mater, Shanghai Conservatory of Music), which creatively fused Yue opera melodies with sonata form. The piece sold over a million copies globally, creating a miracle in the dissemination of Eastern symphonic music. However, in 1964, the Beijing Opera Reform Movement launched the "model opera" project, which deeply integrated European orchestration with the stylized techniques of Chinese opera. The theme "Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy," rendered by French horn in the model opera of the same name, was the pinnacle of cross-cultural experimentation, yet also reflected the historical limitations of art as a political tool. Following the reform and opening-up, *The Five Elements* (1998), composed by Qigang Chen during his studies in France under Olivier Messiaen, reconstructed timbral sequences with Daoist philosophy, marking the true entry of Chinese composers into global modern music dialogue.

The core difference between the musical developments of China and Europe lies in their distinct experiences of modernity. Chinese music modernization has always carried the anxiety of "constructing national identity." Traditional music elements have always served as symbols of cultural subjectivity.

Key moments in the 20th-century history of musical exchange between China and the West highlight the complexity of cross-cultural dialogue. In 1927, under conductor Baiqi Mei, the Shanghai Municipal Council Orchestra gave the first Chinese

¹ Zhou, Zhushuan. *Compendium of the General History of Chinese Music*. Shandong Education Press, 1991.

performance of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, symbolizing the ritualized acceptance of Western classics in China. In 1973, the Philadelphia Orchestra's visit to China became a cultural emblem of the thaw in Sino-American relations. In 1979, the renowned conductor Herbert von Karajan led the Berlin Philharmonic on a visit to China, and since then, more and more of the world's top symphony orchestras have come to China, bringing classical music into the lives of the Chinese people.

FESTIVAL CONCERT

First Performance in China of

BEETHOVEN'S

Ninth Symphony

"The Choral"

To be preceded by

VERDI'S "Stabat Mater"

XVII AND LAST SYMPHONY SEASON OF THE
SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL ORCHESTRA
CONDUCTOR: MAESTRO MARIO PACI

GRAND THEATRE—TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 1936.

The first Chinese performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9
Source: <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/8SFOJSrsZWWjuCEZV4SEMA>



國立音樂院第一次攝影

China's first conservatory, the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, was founded in 1927.
Source: <https://www.shcmusic.edu.cn>



1959年小提琴協奏曲《梁祝》首演現場

The Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto premiered in 1959.
Source: <https://www.shcmusic.edu.cn>

3.2. The similarities and differences between 20th-century Chinese classical music and 20th-century European music.

In the 20th century, both China and Europe experienced profound and complex evolutions in the art of music. While their overall development, historical contexts, and artistic styles exhibit points of convergence, there are also marked differences. European music during this period continued to inherit a tradition that had accumulated over several centuries, undergoing the zenith of Romanticism, the impact of Modernism, and explorations into diversity. Meanwhile, Chinese classical music, based on its traditional roots, continuously absorbed Western music theory and practice, gradually forming a unique national style and attempting a modern transformation. The two traditions reflect different cultural genes and aesthetic pursuits in terms of theoretical systems, expressive techniques, and social functions, while also mirroring the social changes and cultural conflicts under their respective historical conditions.

From the late 19th century to the early 20th century, European music stood at the intersection of Romanticism and Modernism. Composers such as Claude Debussy, Igor Stravinsky, and Arnold Schoenberg broke through traditional tonal systems and pursued new sound effects. Their works integrated folklore, natural landscapes, and philosophical reflections, while boldly innovating in musical structure and form. The complexity and diversity of European music were fully manifested during this period, with both a continuation of traditional symphonic forms and the emergence of highly personal and experimental compositions. Simultaneously, the diversified development of politics, economy, and social structures across European countries created fertile ground for regional musical characteristics and intermingling. For instance, the musical traditions of Austria and Germany were deeply influenced by religious and court cultures, while those of France and Italy displayed more secular and Romantic elements. This multicultural backdrop gave rise to regional stylistic distinctions and complex transnational exchanges in European music.

In contrast, the development of 20th-century Chinese classical music was a tortuous yet exploratory process. Under the influence of intense social upheavals and political movements in modern times, traditional Chinese music underwent continual self-reform during national rejuvenation and modernization. Early Chinese students influenced by Western music and reformist music educators introduced Western musical forms such as symphonies and operas to China and attempted to incorporate elements of traditional national music, thereby pioneering a path of “Sinicized” classical music composition. At the same time, several major historical events had a far-reaching impact on musical art, plunging musical creation and performance into the whirlpool of political ideology at times, but also prompting artists to seek a balance between tradition and modernity, between national and global contexts. Works by composers such as Xinghai Xian and Qiming Lü represent artistic expressions imbued with a strong sense of the era and deep national spirit, formed through the fusion of traditional Chinese musical materials and Western modern compositional techniques.

In terms of musical characteristics, European music tends to emphasize rigor and logical structure in form, with complex use of thematic variation and polyphonic

structure. Its musical language is often rich in symbolism and abstract thinking, pursuing fine-tuned expression in timbre and harmony. Modernist composers, in particular, displayed unprecedented innovation in sound effects, rhythmic treatment, and tonal exploration, resulting in multilayered and multidimensional aesthetic experiences. Additionally, the deep-rooted folk and religious musical elements in European traditions enriched their works with profound cultural connotations and emotional depth. In contrast, Chinese classical music is characterized by its inheritance and reconstruction of traditional materials. Chinese music emphasizes “artistic conception” and “vivid charm,” often conveying emotion and philosophy through concise melodic lines, unique scale systems, and rich performance techniques. While absorbing Western musical techniques, 20th-century Chinese composers strove to discover and utilize traditional Chinese instruments and folk music materials, endeavoring to construct a musical system that embodies both national flavor and modern aesthetic sensibilities. This cross-cultural endeavor has brought unique aesthetic perspectives and expressive methods to Chinese classical music.

Overall, in their respective historical and social contexts, 20th-century Chinese and European music each demonstrated ongoing exploration and integration between tradition and modernity, between national identity and global influence. European music, backed by profound historical accumulation and continuously evolving artistic concepts, exhibited a trend toward stylistic diversity and experimentation. Chinese classical music, on the other hand, gradually developed a music expression model with distinct Chinese characteristics amidst the conflict between traditional culture and modernization. Though there are significant differences in expressive form, theoretical systems, and aesthetic goals, both traditions reflect a shared pursuit of artistic innovation and cultural inheritance within the globalized context. Through historical review and in-depth analysis of their musical features, we can observe that whether in Europe or China, the art of music, ever-changing and developing, embodies each culture’s unique spiritual essence and historical connotation, offering abundant historical legacies and creative resources for 21st-century musical art.

The developmental trajectories of Chinese and European music in the 20th century reveal a complex historical interaction and marked cultural distinctions. The collisions and integrations across political, social, and aesthetic dimensions form a crucial facet of music history research in the era of globalization. During the 20th century, Chinese classical music underwent a dramatic transformation from the disintegration of the traditional ritual-music system to the reconstruction of modernity, whereas European music progressed from the afterglow of late Romanticism to a diversified modernist exploration. Although both shared certain frameworks of Western music technology systems, differences in cultural genes, historical contexts, and artistic objectives gave rise to entirely distinct musical ecologies and aesthetic characteristics.

The historical legacy of the 20th century continues to ferment, bearing witness to the unceasing dialogue and regeneration of human musical civilization.

3.3. The Folk Songs and the Chinese Folk Songs.

Musical Characteristics of Folk Songs

Folk songs possess the stylistic features of the ethnic group or region to which they belong. The melodies of folk songs are closely intertwined with the language of that ethnic group or region, making them easiest to spread in those areas. Folk songs of a certain ethnic group or region often exhibit clear characteristics in terms of scales, modes, and rhythm, with diverse and rich rhythmic forms that are closely related to life's emotions and production activities. For example, in labor folk songs, the rhythm tends to be freer when the labor is more relaxed. The structure of folk songs is generally short, with long lyrics often set to the same melody in repetition.

Folk songs are one of the most valuable components of human culture. They originate from the lives of the people, reflect their lives, and have a profound and widespread influence on their lives. Therefore, Marx said, "Folk songs are the only historical legends and chronicles."

Folk songs are often collective creations that are constantly refined and developed through oral transmission. Their musical language is concise and refined, with vivid and lively musical images and diverse expressive techniques.

Common types of Chinese folk songs include: labor chants, mountain songs, folk tunes, children's songs, and folk songs related to customs.

Ethnic and Regional Styles of Folk Songs

Due to the influence of geographical environment, customs, language characteristics, cultural traditions, aesthetic concepts, and other factors, the folk songs of an ethnic group or region exhibit a relatively stable characteristic in terms of content, melody, structure, musical features, and singing style. This characteristic is the ethnic style or regional style of the folk songs of a particular group or region.

Folk songs from different ethnic groups or regions may have different ethnic or regional styles. However, in some cases, where an ethnic group spans a large area, its ethnic style may blend with the local styles of the regions where it is distributed.

The Basic Characteristics of Southern Chinese Folk Songs

As early as the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, southern China was already widely influenced by folk songs such as "Chu Sound" and "Wu Sound." Chu Sound refers to the folk songs from the two lakes area in the middle and lower Yangtze River, while Wu Sound refers to the folk songs from the lower Yangtze River and Zhejiang areas. These styles form a stark contrast to the folk music of northern China. For over two thousand years, this style has been inherited and expanded. Typically, the lyrics of southern folk songs are more subtle and introspective, often using metaphors and allusions. Their melodies tend to be gentle, flowing, delicate, and lyrical.²

Every ethnic group has its own folk songs, which reflect the unique history, customs, personality, emotions, and cultural traditions of the group.

² *Music Appreciation*, People's Music Publishing House, 2004.

3.4. Brief History of Chinese Art Song.

Art song first appeared in the 18th century as a Western compositional style. Meant for performance in private homes, it brought singers and pianists together to interpret poetry set to music. Art song is a multilingual genre featuring the greatest cultural diversity in classical music.³

The texts in Chinese art songs can be divided into three types. The first is the use of poetry. These poems can be contemporary with the composer or from decades, centuries, or even thousands of years ago. Many composers like to write music for such poems. First, this is so because these poems can reflect the composer's current state of mind, or they have historical significance and may better express the composer's thoughts. The second reason is that the texts of ancient poems are often brief and can express the most meaning with the fewest words. The second type is the use of texts from other languages. There are 56 ethnic groups in China, and when composers want to describe the musical characteristics of one of these ethnic groups, they will put some words of this ethnic group within their art songs or use texts from those cultures. The third type is the most common one, in which the composer will request an author to write a text on a desired topic. In general, Chinese art songs, as a musical genre, have become an important part of the field of Chinese music through their unique expression and profound cultural representation.

The origin and development of Chinese art songs reflect the social environment of the time. In this early stage of the development of Chinese art songs, China was experiencing great social changes, and the country was invaded by many countries. The texts of the art songs of this first period represent the inner feelings of the Chinese people at that time. For example, Youmei Xiao, in "Ask," expresses concerns about domestic and foreign aggression and the country's decline at that time: when the mountains and rivers are broken and the country is in trouble, people should stand up bravely and assume the responsibility for the rise and fall of the world.

Furthermore, some composers prefer to use ancient Chinese poems as the texts to express their inner feelings. For example, in Shangguo Liao's "River of No Return," he used a poem from 800 years ago. The poet, Shi Su (1037-1101), when he visited Huangzhou, thought of the war that took place there more than 1,700 years ago, so he wrote this poem to express his praise for the motherland and the praise and remembrance of historical heroes.

In general, the texts of this period mostly express the lyricists' worries about the country's internal and external troubles and their expectations for the future.

³ *Music Appreciation*, People's Music Publishing House, 2004.

Chinese art songs were introduced and developed by the first Chinese composers after the early 20th century. Composers went to study in Europe, where they combined Western composition techniques with classical Chinese poetry to create the first art songs. A genre first popular at the end of the 18th century, Western art songs have had an influence on Chinese art song composition beginning in the 20th century. One of the most important characteristics of an art song is the use of poetry, often by famous writers, often focusing on expressing the inner world of the characters, reflecting the noble artistic realm, artistic taste, and artistic ideals of the poets and composers. Western art songs typically focus on issues of love, longing, and nature. However, many of China's art songs depict social issues. For example, during the Anti-Japanese War, the nostalgia for the lost homeland and the praise of the brave soldiers inspired the Chinese to resist the invaders. Western art song is also often inspired by a composer's daily life and experiences. This is similar to the inspirations for many ancient Chinese poems. However, Chinese art songs originated in the 20th century, an era of backwardness, aggression, and poverty. In an unstable living environment. Therefore, many of the texts for Chinese art songs reflect the struggles of the nation and society.

These early Chinese classical music works used ancient Chinese poetry and followed the style of 19th-century European art songs. Over time, art songs have undergone a diverse evolution and development in China, including works based on Chinese folk songs, ancient songs, and various forms of song styles. Especially during the period of China's socialist revolution and construction, the forms of art songs became more diverse, and various types of art songs, such as solo songs, lyrical songs, and musical epics, appeared.

From the beginning of the development of Chinese art songs to the present reveals a history of approximately 100 years. In this past century, Chinese composers have experienced five periods: the New Culture Movement, Anti-Japanese War, Building Socialism, Reform and Opening Up, and the 21st Century. Compared with the history of Western art songs, the development time of Chinese art songs is very short.

An interesting note related to the performance and study of art songs in China is that every music conservatory has a department for singers. This department is now typically divided into two parts: singers who are majoring in Chinese folk songs and singers who are majoring in art songs and Opera, both Chinese and Western.

Chapter 4. The French Horn in the 20th century.

4.1. The development of the French Horn performance in the 20th century.

The development of horn performance in the 20th century is a history of innovation intertwining technique and art, and a microcosmic reflection of sociocultural changes in the field of music. Against the backdrop of the Industrial Revolution and two world wars, the horn gradually transformed from a supporting role in classical orchestras into a solo instrument with independent expressive power. The innovation in performance techniques, instrument construction, and musical vocabulary deeply reflects the trajectory of the transformation of modern musical aesthetics.

In the 20th century, the horn, as a classical instrument, experienced significant developments in performance and stylistic evolution. The musical works of this period not only enriched the horn's playing techniques but also expanded its expressiveness in orchestras and chamber music. The history of the horn can be traced back to early hunting horns or brass instruments, but in the 20th century, it gradually developed into an independent and expressive performance instrument. As the brass instrument with the widest range and the most complex technical system, the horn underwent a revolutionary transformation from a supporting role in symphonies to a solo instrument in the 20th century. This process was directly propelled by the technological revolution of the industry and closely connected to the paradigm shift in modern musical aesthetics. The 20th century was a golden era of rapid development for horn performance art. During this period, the horn gradually moved from an accompaniment role in traditional symphony orchestras into fields such as solo, chamber music, and film music, becoming a highly expressive instrument. Performance techniques have made revolutionary progress during this century. With the improvement of instrument manufacturing, especially the popularization of the double horn, performers could more flexibly control pitch and tone, and perform more complex modulations and fast passages. At the same time, breakthroughs in high register playing, the optimization of breathing and tonguing techniques, and the artistic use of special techniques such as sustained notes, leaps, tremolo, and mutes greatly expanded the horn's expressive capacity.

Many outstanding horn performers emerged during this period, playing a key role in advancing performance art. British performer Dennis Brain is recognized as the father of the modern horn. With his elegant and pure tone, extraordinary musical understanding, and authoritative interpretations of classical works (especially Beethoven's "Sonata for Horn and Piano in F Major, Op.17"), he influenced an entire generation. German performer Hermann Baumann was known for his playing technique and the revival of the Baroque natural horn. Peter Damm represented the rigorous style of the German-Austrian genre and was particularly adept at performing Strauss's works. Meanwhile, the United States gradually established a systematic horn education system. Philip Farkas, principal horn of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, authored "The Art of French Horn Playing," a book praised as a classic textbook for horn performance that had a profound impact on global horn education. Barry Tuckwell, born in Australia, became a prominent figure in the European and American horn scenes with his excellent

solo skills and international influence.

In terms of education, the 20th century saw the formation of two major horn education systems, represented by Germany and the United States. The former emphasized tone consistency and the German horn tradition, while the latter was more systematic in performance freedom and teaching methods. A large number of teaching collections and exercise books (such as those by Kopprasch, Gallay, etc.) were standardized and widely used in global teaching. Meanwhile, the International Horn Society, established in 1970, further promoted communication and cooperation among horn performers worldwide, organizing competitions, lectures, and masterclasses.

In terms of composition, the 20th century was a flourishing period for horn solo and chamber music creation. From the afterglow of Romanticism to the diverse styles of modern music, composers continuously sought to expand the expressive boundaries of the horn. Richard Strauss's horn works became milestones in the horn repertoire. Paul Hindemith's "Horn Sonata" and Britten's "Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings" were widely performed. At the same time, the horn played an increasingly important role in film music. Film composers such as John Williams used the horn extensively to express emotions such as heroism, lyricism, and mystery, bringing the horn into the public eye. Significant achievements were also made in instrument manufacturing during this century. The German Kruspe system and the American Geyer system gradually became mainstream designs for modern horns. Well-known brands such as Alexander, Conn, Holton, Yamaha, and Paxman continuously improved horn structure and materials, making the instrument more stable in pitch and more penetrating in tone. Preferences in horn models also reflected different genres and performance styles. For example, German performers preferred the Alexander 103, while American performers favored the Conn 8D or Geyer-style horns.

1909 marked an important milestone in the German instrument company Gebr. Alexander's history with the development of the first full double horn, the Model 103. This patent marked the beginning of rapid development in horn design.



F/Bb Double Horn · Model 103 Source: <https://gebr-alexander.de>

Model 103 is the world-famous Alexander model, unequalled in tone quality and intonation. The double horn has established itself as the orchestral instrument of choice. The combination of full Bb and F horns offers the musician great flexibility in intonation and tone. There is also a definite correlation between mass and tonal projection. With full double horns, the thumb valve serves to change to either the shorter Bb horn or the longer F horn. In 2015, the "Verband Deutsche Manufakturen e.V." awarded Model 103 the Manufactory Product of the Year.

Overall, the 20th century witnessed the transformation of the horn from an orchestral instrument mainly responsible for harmony and transitions into a modern instrument with high solo capability, profound expressiveness, and wide artistic adaptability. This transformation was not only driven by technological and manufacturing innovations but also benefited from the tireless efforts of countless performers and educators, as well as the continuous exploration of its potential by composers. The evolution of horn performance art in the 20th century laid a solid foundation for later musical practices and provided rich artistic resources and inspiration for contemporary performers.

In the 20th century, the French horn gradually established its position in the modern symphony orchestra. With the development of large orchestras and the diversification of compositions, the role of the French horn evolved from a supporting instrument to a solo instrument. The most renowned and also the author's favorite composer is the German composer Richard Strauss, who was the son of Franz Strauss, a horn player and composer. Richard Strauss composed two horn concertos—the first in his youth, and the second in his later years. From the late 19th century to the mid-20th century. These two pieces are very famous in the field of horn and are pieces that every horn student must practice. These two pieces have pushed the sound, technique, expressiveness, and musicality of horn playing to new heights. In addition, he made extensive use of the French horn in his symphonic works. In 19th-century symphonic compositions, most orchestras used no more than four horns; Beethoven's symphonies often featured just two horns. However, Richard Strauss frequently employed eight horns in his symphonic works (e.g., *Ein Heldenleben*), and in his *Eine Alpensinfonie*, Op. 64, he used a total of 14 horns—an unprecedented move. This greatly enriched the role of the French horn in symphonic compositions, making it more magnificent, powerful, and impactful. The famous composer Gustav Mahler, who lived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, not only employed eight horns, but he also innovatively instructed all horn players to stand and perform during the climax at the end of the fourth movement of his Symphony. He even included the act of raising the horns while playing to achieve greater sound penetration and visual effect. These examples represent the innovations and transformations in horn performance within symphony orchestras during the Late 19th century and early 20th century.

Throughout this developmental process, horn performance techniques and styles were not only influenced by the characteristics of the times, but also became more diverse. An increasing number of horn players began to explore different performance styles, such as using modern audio techniques or engaging in improvisation, all of which significantly enriched the expressive forms of horn performance. With the enhancement of music education and performance practice, a new generation of horn players has continually emerged. These players not only master traditional performance techniques but also boldly innovate when interpreting contemporary works.

Overall, the development of horn performance in the 20th century was a transition from tradition to modernity, from uniformity to diversity. With changes in musical styles and advances in performance techniques, the French horn gradually became a uniquely charming and multifaceted instrument, adding new dimensions to rich musical compositions. This process reflects not only the artistic exploration of individual performers but also the broader trajectory of musical development.

This century-spanning evolution proves that every leap in horn performance technique is the result of a co-evolution of engineering, physiology, and aesthetic concepts. The modernization of this ancient brass instrument is, in essence, a microcosmic history of technological humanism. Entering the 21st century, the art of horn performance now stands at a new historical crossroads, and its future evolution will continue to bear witness to the infinite possibilities of human musical expression.

4.2. The Development History of the French Horn in China.

As a Western brass instrument with a unique tone and expressive capability, the French horn has experienced a comprehensive developmental process in China, from passive introduction and initial imitation, to the establishment of a system and technical advancement, and ultimately to localized innovation and international integration. This historical evolution not only reflects the trend of Chinese musical culture aligning with global developments but also bears witness to the growth and maturation of modern music education and performance in China.

The earliest introduction of the French horn into China can be traced back to the late 19th century. In 1879, the “Shanghai Amateur Wind Music Association” was founded in Shanghai, with about 20–30 members, making it one of the earliest modern Western wind ensembles in China. Initially composed of amateur enthusiasts, the association gradually expanded into a full orchestra, and there are records of French horn players at the time, though all of them were foreigners. During the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China, the French horn began appearing in church schools established by Western missionaries and diplomats as part of Western orchestras. Meanwhile, military bands modeled after Western military systems also included the French horn as an important part of the brass section, incorporating it into various military and governmental activities and celebrations. However, due to the lack of teaching resources and performance materials, and limited cultural acceptance of Western instruments, the development of the French horn during this period largely remained at a practical level, without the formation of a systematic performance framework or professional education mechanism.

In the 1920s, new music education institutions began to emerge. In 1927, the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai (now Shanghai Conservatory of Music) was established. Although it initially focused on piano and vocal music, orchestral teaching gradually took shape.

With the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the importance placed on music and the arts rapidly increased, and Western music education received substantial support at the policy level. In the 1950s, the introduction of the Soviet music education system became a key factor in the development of the French horn. Institutions such as the Central Conservatory of Music, Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Shenyang Conservatory of Music, and Sichuan Conservatory of Music successively established brass departments, and the French horn course became an essential part of the curriculum. Meanwhile, the visits and lectures by Soviet experts and the translation and introduction of a large number of Soviet textbooks laid the technical and normative foundation for French horn education in China. During this stage, the role of the French horn gradually expanded from military bands to symphony orchestras, playing an increasingly important role in harmony, melody, and solo performance. The establishment of national orchestras such as the Central Philharmonic and the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra provided professional performance platforms for horn players.

Around 1955, the government invited a large number of foreign artists to China for teaching and lectures. A group of outstanding students received systematic masterclass

training and became a core force in the field. This move laid a solid foundation for the development of the French horn in China and marked a significant turning point in its history. In the sixth World Festival of Youth and Students in 1957 and the 16th Geneva International Music Competition in 1960, Xianguang Han won the bronze and silver medals, respectively, in the French horn competition.

After the reform and opening-up, China gradually rebuilt its educational and cultural systems, and French horn performance entered a new stage of rapid development. With the easing of study-abroad policies, more and more Chinese horn students went to Europe and the United States for further study, receiving professional training in German, French, and American performance systems. These returnees brought back advanced teaching concepts and performance techniques to China and took on teaching and guidance roles at major music conservatories, significantly raising the overall standard of performance in the country. Additionally, music schools across China continued to strengthen their brass teaching capabilities, and performance techniques moved from past imitation to diversified fusion and individualized development. Various French horn competitions and brass music festivals began to be held nationwide. Internationally renowned performers were invited to give lectures and masterclasses, and horn players became increasingly active in concerts, TV music programs, film scores, and other fields, gradually bringing horn art out of the conservatory and into the public eye.

In December 1982, the Beijing Horn Research Group of the Performing Arts Committee of the China Musicians Association was established in Beijing. This was China's first academic organization dedicated to French horn art activities. The first president was Dafang Sun, and the vice president was Zong He.

Entering the 21st century, the development of French horn art in China has shown a strong trend of simultaneous professionalization and internationalization. On one hand, Chinese performers have repeatedly won awards in international competitions such as the ARD International Music Competition in Munich and the Prague Spring Horn Competition, earning China a place on the global stage of horn performance. Many outstanding players have been recruited by world-class symphony orchestras or have taken up teaching positions at overseas music conservatories. On the other hand, the domestic music education system has become increasingly comprehensive, with teaching content focusing more on the cultivation of various performance styles and expressive techniques. The French horn has become a key component of brass instruction at major conservatories, not limited to solo and symphonic performance but also extending into chamber music, contemporary music, and new media music.

At the same time, French horn performance organizations and practical activities have gradually expanded. Various horn ensembles, brass quintets, and university clubs have emerged across the country, regularly hosting performances and educational outreach events. Large-scale projects such as the "Beijing Horn Art Festival," "Tianjin Jinbao Horn Art Festival," and "Shenzhen Alexander Horn Competition" have brought horn art increasingly into the public eye. It is also worth noting that Chinese domestic horn manufacturing has made qualitative breakthroughs. The craftsmanship of instruments has been significantly improved, with some models now being exported to Southeast

Asia, Europe, and other regions, breaking the long-standing dependence on imported Western instruments and further promoting the popularization and professionalization of the French horn in China.

Overall, the century-long journey of the French horn in China represents a complete developmental trajectory: from introduction to imitation, from the construction of an education system to the formation of a local style, and eventually to the establishment of international competitiveness. Throughout this process, the technical system, educational mechanism, performance practice, repertoire creation, and instrument manufacturing have advanced in coordination, forming a multidimensional growth path for horn art in China. It is foreseeable that, under the continued interconnectedness of global cultures, Chinese French horn art will further expand its expressive dimensions, deepen its cultural connotations, and ascend to greater artistic heights.

Chapter 5. The European music section of my CD.



Paul Hindemith . Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Hindemith

Paul Hindemith (1895-1963) was a German composer of modern music (New Music), theorist, teacher, viola player, and conductor. The foremost German composer of his generation, he was a figure central to both music composition and musical thought during the inter-war years. In his early creative period, he shocked classical concert audiences with provocatively new sounds (jagged rhythms, garish dissonances, inclusion of jazz elements), which earned him the reputation of a “citizen scaremonger”. During the National Socialist era, his works were banned from being performed, to which he ultimately responded by emigrating, first to Switzerland and then to the USA. In the meantime, his compositional style developed into a neoclassical style that explored classical forms such as the symphony, sonata, and fugue in a new way. In doing so, he distanced himself from the Romantic image of the artist as a genius inspired by inspiration alone and emphasized the importance of mastering compositional technique as an indispensable prerequisite for the composer. The emphasis on craftsmanship is also reflected in his theoretical writings, particularly his instruction in composition. His theoretical system can be briefly described as free tonality, which distinguishes itself from both the traditional major-minor tonality and Schönberg's twelve-tone atonality. He advocated “utility music” and saw it as the composer's duty to face up to social challenges and not to compose purely as an end in itself. Hindemith embodies to a particular degree the type of universal musician who was equally adept in theory and practice. For example, he had a wealth of experience as an orchestral (violin and viola) and chamber musician (as a violist in the Amar Quartet). As a conductor, he benefited from his largely professional mastery of all standard orchestral instruments.

Hindemith's new concept of music is reflected above all in the extensive production of chamber music that began in 1935 and culminated in 1939 in the famous plan for a series of sonatas for all commonly used instruments. “You'll be surprised,” he wrote to Willy Strecker on November 20, 1939, “that I'm writing sonatas for the entire wind

section. I've always intended to create a whole series of such pieces. Firstly, there's nothing sensible written for these instruments—apart from a few classical pieces—so although it may not be profitable from a short-term business perspective, in the long run it is worthwhile to enrich this literature. And secondly, since I'm already so deeply interested in wind instruments, I take great pleasure in these pieces, and ultimately they serve as technical exercises for the big project, which will hopefully begin in the spring.” In these new chamber music works, Hindemith draws on completely different aesthetic and compositional foundations compared to his early chamber music. The dominance of chamber music in the 1920s, which hardly conformed to the ideal types of 19th-century chamber music, represented a strong reaction against the late-Romantic “worldview music” of the *fin de siècle*, forming the very core of musical development; and through chamber music—mostly written for his own use or for friends—Hindemith explored other areas of music.

Sonata for horn and piano(1939)

To write at least one sonata for each orchestral instrument. Hindemith began his wind series in 1939 with sonatas for the horn as well as for the trumpet. (The project was to carry him well into the 1950s.) The sonata for horn and piano is typical of Hindemith's work in this genre: classically balanced, with a contrapuntal equality between the two instruments.

The first movement, “*Mässig bewegt*” begins with a broad, self-confident horn theme over a percolating piano accompaniment. The second theme, equally spacious, is more reflective. A mysterious, step-like passage leads to an efficient development of all this material, ending the movement with a heroic statement of the opening melody, now emphasizing its very faint Hungarian turn at the end.

The second movement, entitled '*Ruhig bewegt*', contains slow, expansive horn melodies whose romantic potential is undermined by the piano's alternation between busy accompaniment and firm tread and by the horn's sometimes wide intervallic leaps. Once a brief, recurring splash of a motif is established, the concluding movement '*Lebhaft*' again plays broad horn themes against urgent piano work; sometimes the horn draws the piano into more introspective interludes and towards the end the piano engages the horn in a little dance, but for the most part each instrument retains its initial character.



Lars-Erik Larsson . Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lars-Erik_Larsson

Lars-Erik Larsson was a Swedish composer, conductor, and music teacher.

After taking the organist's examination in Växjö (1924), he studied at the Stockholm Conservatory (1925–1929) with Ernst Ellberg for composition and Olallo Morales for conducting. While still a student, he attracted attention with his First Symphony (1927–1928), and in 1929, he received a state composer's grant. In 1929–1930, he made a study trip to Vienna and Leipzig, taking lessons from Berg and Fritz Reuter, and in 1930–31 he was a coach at the Royal Theatre, Stockholm. He then taught music in Malmö and Lund and was music critic of the *Lunds Dagblad* (1933–1937). His *Sinfonietta*, performed at the 1934 ISCM Festival, brought him international recognition and contributed to his growing reputation in the 1930s. He worked for Swedish radio as a conductor, composer, and producer (1937–1943); from 1945 to 1947, he was supervisor of the non-professional symphony orchestras, and he remained conductor of the radio chamber orchestra until 1953. He was also professor of composition at the Stockholm Conservatory (1947–1959) and later director of music at Uppsala University (1961–1966). In 1971, he retired to Helsingborg.

His style as a composer is eclectic, ranging from the late Romantic to techniques derived from Arnold Schoenberg's twelve-note system, but original in method. He was the first Swede to write serial music (1932). Yet other works of that period are post-Sibelian or neo-classical, and his output generally is characterized by a variety of styles. He wrote for the theatre, cinema, and broadcasting, in addition to the more traditional forms of symphony, concerto, chamber, and vocal music.

He wrote a series of Twelve Concertinos for solo instruments: flute, clarinet, bassoon, oboe, horn, trumpet, trombone, violin, viola, cello, double bass, and piano.

The Lars-Erik Larsson Concertino is one of twelve Concertinos that Larsson wrote for various solo instruments. I have the first and second movements recorded on my CD. The first movement begins with a somber string line, which quickly gives way to the opening horn solo. The movement alternates between a dark and mysterious mood and a majestic one. The second movement is lyrical. Its long phrases are plaintive and nostalgic, creating a sense of uncertainty that is resolved in the last bar of the movement. The difficulty in performing this work lies in finding the right timbre. Overall, this composition, with its straightforward melodies, is an audience-friendly addition to a 20th-century concert.



Werner Preisegott Pirchner. Source: <https://wernerpirchner.com/biographie/>
Werner Preisegott Pirchner (1940-2001) was an Austrian jazz musician, composer, poet, and illustrator.

Pirchner began his musical career in jazz, but was involved early on with contemporary music and its theorists. He followed the latest trends in jazz music as a youth. Later influences included the theories of Schoenberg and the music of composers from Bach, Schubert, and Bartók to Thelonious Monk and John Cage. After arranging music for the Austrian armed forces' dance band, he became a freelance composer and performer. He has also appeared with the Oscar Klein Quartet, Austria Dei, the Vienna Art Orchestra, Eisenbahner-Musik Innsbruck, the Lauren Newton Quartet, and other performers and ensembles. He began to compose music for classical musicians in 1981. Pirchner's multi-layered music combines elements of jazz, light music, and so-called serious music unusual way.

Pirchner's music projects a state of uncertainty. Mourning and melancholy never appear unambiguously, and a suggestion of subversive sadness lingers even when there is a pretence of happiness. Unlike many contemporary composers, Pirchner has not asked himself whether what he has done is new; instead, in the interest of self-criticism, he has taken what was already in existence, subjected it to a process of alienation in a highly original way. In his music, seriousness and entertainment are not incompatible opposites. As Harry Larcher noted in a radio broadcast: 'Rarely has a musician, a composer so self-consciously positioned himself between every category of music, the only place where the spirit can still move freely and unsupported by dogmatic allegiance'.

Werner Pirchner's works for brass quintet, chamber music and string orchestra, piano trio, and many solo instruments rank among the most significant creations of music in the second half of the 20th century.

Pirchner wanted to write pieces that musicians enjoy playing and that audiences enjoy listening to. His compositions, full of melodic ideas, harmonic and rhythmic surprises, and cleverly crafted through his wordplays and drawings, bear witness to his musical endeavor to achieve the greatest possible freedom with the greatest possible precision, thereby creating a new musical language that is understandable and brings joy.

What I recorded on the CD is the first movement, Grashüpfen (Grasshopping * Herbe sautiller), from his work PWV 53: Feld-, Wald- und Wiesen-Soli.

Pirchner wrote in the score to the horn player:

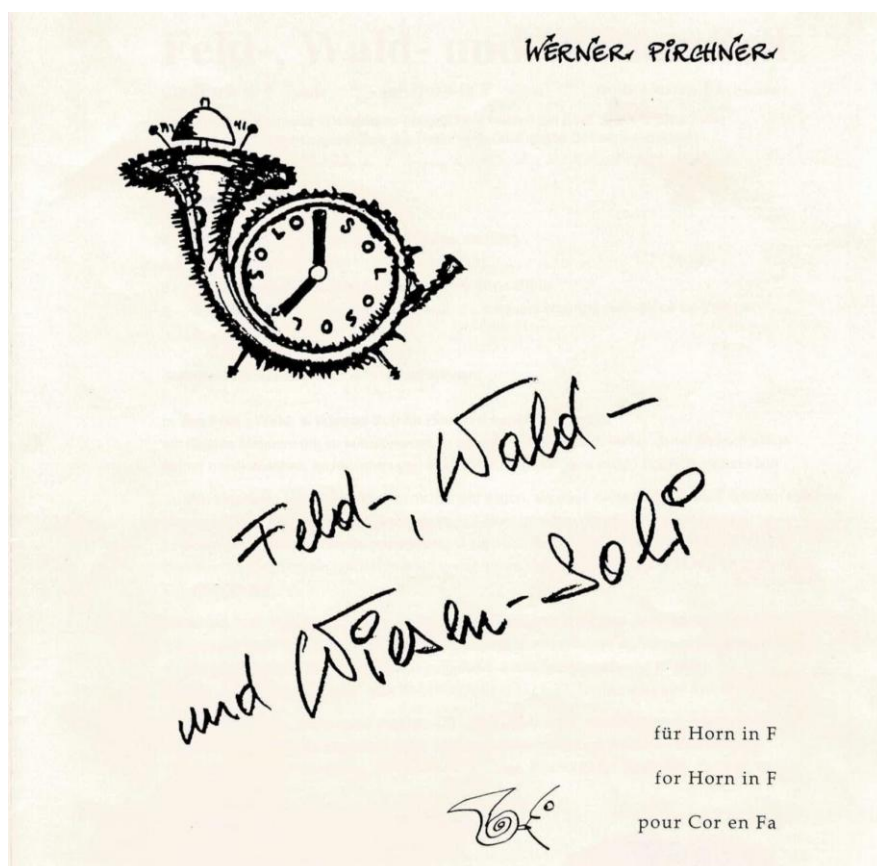
Dear Horn Artists,

In the "Feld-, Wald- und Wiesen-Soli" I have attempted to compose a small masterpiece in which a person connected to the horn can project some of their musical, technical, and spiritual possibilities into the cosmos.

Regarding the individual movements, I would like to say no more than this: this music can be performed in a beautiful concert hall, a tiny music school, on an unspoiled meadow, in an abandoned brass mine, in a tent, or at home.

I would like to thank the horn professor of the Salzburg Mozarteum, Hansjörg Angerer, who has polished my modest knowledge of the most coiled of all instruments through countless pieces of advice.

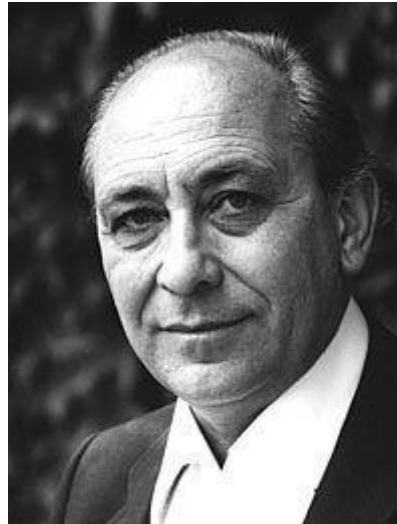
He inspired the piece and premiered it in 1994.⁴



The cover page of the sheet music

Source: <https://wernerpirchner.com/worklist/pwv-53-feld-wald-und-wiesen-soli/>

⁴ <https://wernerpirchner.com/worklist/pwv-53-feld-wald-und-wiesen-soli/>. 16.04.2025.



Bernhard Krol. Source: <https://www.editions-bim.com/composers/bernhard-krol>

Bernhard Krol (1920-2013) was a German horn player and composer. He was a horn player with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra. He was also active as a composer. Although he studied composition in Vienna with Josef Rufer, Krol used the tonal system, and his compositions are more in the tradition of Max Reger or Paul Hindemith. His compositions contain traces of Schoenberg's atonal musical influence, yet he still maintains the classic and tonal harmonies of influential composers such as Paul Hindemith. However, Krol has adopted neither serial nor free-tonal compositional practices. His style is that of a practicing musician who strives to entertain his listeners in a pleasurable, albeit demanding manner. Bernhard Krol wrote numerous works for wind ensembles in particular. Bernhard Krol dedicated a large part of his artistic output to church music. A large proportion of his 180 or so opus-numbered compositions - organ works, choral works, masses, orchestral and chamber music - are dedicated to church music.

Laudatio, written for Hermann Baumann in 1965, was written as a brief meditative piece at about 4 minutes in length. Baumann originally requested the piece so that he could do a radio recording, with it receiving its first live public performance in 1970. Laudatio was written just a few years before Krol retired from Stuttgart. The title itself is an allusion to a lauda, a hymn of praise and devotion, and the piece contains a variation of the early Christian Hymn *Te Deum Laudamus*, which translates to "We praise you, O God." It is worth noting that the *Te Deum* is a text that has been used a great number of times by a multitude of composers, and its text was set in German by Martin Luther.

The piece is unmetered and through-composed, being divided into three sections, an A-B-C form. He opens with his first motive, a D-flat resolving down to a C, and then immediately follows up with the other motive of the piece, which ascends from G to A-flat to B-flat. Though these two gestures occur with each other frequently throughout the piece, one can see them as having different statements, and their restatements happen separately often enough that they are their separate motifs.

Laudatio opens with a motif representing a spiritual question, followed by a journey of a quest for understanding.



The first motive serves as a “crying out,” reappearing more frequently in the more active moments of the composition, and experiences many more transformations than the latter motive.

The second serves as a question, asking the listener something of an almost spiritual nature. Michelle Stebleton, Associate Professor of Horn at Florida State University, describes what follows as “a journey, a search for understanding (Boldin).” The first section serves as exposition to this journey, setting the stage with many phrases seemingly unconnected to each other, as if they are simply strands of thought along the journey to understanding. Perhaps the most powerful moment in this section is one of the only two that possesses a metered feeling to it.

There is a phrase that is first played at fortissimo, and then immediately after repeated at pianissimo, and is marked “Grave.” The weight given by this moment is dirge-like, giving further darkness to this journey.



The first section closes with a restatement of the motifs in their original key, and then is stated once again, slightly embellished.



The second section begins vivaciously, in what is the only other section in Laudatio that feels metered in standard performance practice. This then subsides and leads into the quotation of the Te Deum. He opens the quotation with the performer playing the notes stopped, and has them play open again on the next gesture. This technique effectively emulates the call of a church cantor, followed by the addition of a chorus, a very common practice for church services still used in some Catholic churches today.



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N. Simrock, Berlin-London



As the second section continues, it produces more gestures, more strands of thought, that lead towards another statement of the original motifs without embellishment, closing the second section.

allegro

p *ff*

moderato

mf *p*

adagio solenne

p *mf*

The third section, one continuous thought, serves as a coda to the entire piece. It also brings a resolution to the motivic material that has been present in the composition, giving it an authentic cadence and the audience a sense of closure.

moderato

mf *p*

adagio solenne

p *mf*

mf *f* *mf* *p*

morendo



Francis Jean Marcel Poulenc (in the early 1920s).

Source: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2023861917/>

Francis Jean Marcel Poulenc (7 January 1899 – 30 January 1963) was a French composer and pianist. His compositions include songs, solo piano works, chamber music, choral pieces, operas, ballets, and orchestral concert music. During the first half of his career, the simplicity and directness of his writing led many critics away from thinking of him as a serious composer. Gradually, since World War II, it has become clear that the absence from his music of linguistic complexity in no way argues a corresponding absence of feeling or technique; and that while, in the field of French religious music, he disputes supremacy with Messiaen, in that of the melodic he is the most distinguished composer since the death of Fauré.

In addition to his work as a composer, Poulenc was an accomplished pianist. He was among the first composers to see the importance of the gramophone, and he recorded extensively from 1928 onwards.

The sonata is the composer's second extant work of chamber music, after the Sonata for two clarinets. It was written between August and October 1922 at the same time as the Sonata for clarinet and bassoon, and was premiered at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris on 4 January 1923 at a Satie-Poulenc concert organized by Jean Wiener. Poulenc revised the composition in 1945.

Like most of the composer's chamber music pieces, except the Cello Sonata, the sonata for horn, trumpet and trombone has three short movements:

1. Allegro moderato
2. Andante
3. Rondeau

The character of the music resembles fair music, conforming to the spirit of Les

Six. Kathy Henkel described the first movement as a series of dance episodes, the second as a lullaby derived from motifs of the first movement, and the third as a rondo with more light-hearted dance music. She summarizes the piece's "variety of tone colors, striking rhythms, delicious dissonances, and elegant wit".

The third movement is perhaps the most indicative of Poulenc's preference for musical humor and wit. The tempo remains very quick and lively throughout, with the style being rhythmic and somewhat raucous. Poulenc is most descriptive in his indications to the performers in this movement, his remarks range from "nervous" and "discreet" to "very rude" and "very marked". Within the fast and lively framework of this extremely brief movement, the range of articulation markings and various effects created by wide shifts in dynamics and stylistic approach is extraordinary.

The third movement is a source of controversy between those who have studied Poulenc's compositions as well as those who may be insistently meticulous about performance practice. The controversy being referred to lies within the articulations, or rather, the inconsistencies in the articulations.

Poulenc's intentional effort to create what could be called a "textural shift". Because of this, performers must be diligent in the performance of all the indicated articulations to bring out these various resulting textures. Upon first glance, it would seem that simple misprints and copying errors may be the cause of this inconsistent application of articulations. However, after closer examination, it is apparent that Poulenc intends to consistently create contradictions between the instruments.

The combination of articulations between the three instruments for specific themes is never repeated in its exact state. This pursuit to create new textures through fluctuation of articulations is achieved in some cases through the alteration of even a single pitch, and in other cases, the lack of articulation marking is the alteration. Example 1 (3 photos) shows the differing adaptations of the various entrances of the main theme found in the first two measures. Notice the subtle differences in the articulations between the three parts and how they are altered in later entrances of the same theme. Also notice the subtle changes in the trombone part as the last note in measure 2 is tenuto, then in measure. 16 The rhythm is entirely different and in m. 40 the last note is staccato.

III. Rondeau.

Animé (♩ = 144)

COR *très rythmé* *léger*

TROMP. *mf très rythmé* *léger*

TROMB. *mf* *stacc.*

très marqué *f* *sec.* *mf* *sec.* *p* *léger*



First system of musical notation, consisting of three staves (treble, treble, and bass clef). The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The music features a continuous eighth-note pattern in the upper staves and a more rhythmic bass line.



Second system of musical notation, consisting of three staves. A red bracket highlights the first two measures of the system. A box containing the number "2" is placed above the first measure of the top staff. The notation includes dynamic markings *ff* and *f*, and the instruction *f en dehors* below the bass staff.



Third system of musical notation, consisting of three staves. The notation includes dynamic markings *f*, *mf*, and *sec.* (secco). A horizontal line is drawn under the first two measures of the system.

5 Tempo

mf discret

effacé

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Example 1

Another interesting aspect of the trombone part in the second example (mm. 15 - 16) is the glissando between the D and its upper octave neighbor. The trombone part is marked *in/at emphasis*, indicating that Poulenc wanted this figure to draw significant attention, a slight break from the standardized accompaniment role that the trombone has held through most of the piece. The glissando into the second note is idiomatic to the instrument, but the origin or influence of this device is a point of study for many trombone scholars, and it is interesting to question how it found its way into this particular piece. Some theories suggest that the development of jazz may be the cause of this device showing up in classical literature; however, in 1922, jazz had not yet reached a wide audience except for the developing Dixieland and New Orleans styles, which did include a technique of trombone playing known as “tail-gate” style. This style was also used heavily in ragtime music to produce a cadential effect, or outlining the major dominant-tonic relationships. A more solid theory, and one that would certainly pertain more closely to this Sonata, is that the device came from circus act music in Europe and North America throughout the nineteenth century. Trombonist Henry Fillmore wrote several band pieces to feature the trombone glissando for popular American band music. Examples of these include “Lassus Trombone” (1915) and “Sally Trombone” (1917). Fillmore used the idiomatic effects as an influence from his own experiences as a circus musician. Poulenc’s enjoyment of popular music as well as

circus themes is well documented, and this particular influence appears in many of his songs for voice and piano accompaniment as well as many of his instrumental works. Textures are often created when at least two instruments use two contrasting articulations. The result can be somewhat confusing to the performers as it will seem as though mistakes are being made, and the articulations should be more concise. This is one of the ways Poulenc implements his particular compositional wit and humor. As with the “added-note” technique, Poulenc intends to create what seems like erroneous music. There are many examples where there are at least two different articulation markings within the three instrumental parts. In addition to the excerpts shown in Example 1, which also fall under this category, Example 2 (3 photos) shows a few more places in the movement where this is the case.

The image displays two musical excerpts, labeled 1 and 2, from a score by Francis Poulenc. Both excerpts are in 3/4 time and feature three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs).

Excerpt 1: The first system is marked *très marqué*. The first staff has a *f* (forte) dynamic marking. The second staff has a *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamic marking. The third staff has a *p* (piano) dynamic marking. The second system is marked *sec.* (secco) and *mf*. The third system is marked *sec.* and *p léger* (piano, light). Red brackets highlight the first and second systems.

Excerpt 2: The first system is marked *accentuée*. The second system is marked *sec.* (secco). The third system is marked *sec.* (secco). The fourth system is marked *sec.* (secco).

f
sec.
 mf
sec.
 f
sec.

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ff
 ff
 ff
 ff
subito
 mf
subitop
léger et sec
 p
léger

Example 2

Poulenc uses articulations to delineate the various sections of the form as well as create new textures. The B section of the movement begins in m. 24 as the horn takes over sole representation of the opening theme. To distinguish this section, Poulenc indicates that the horn should perform this theme using staccato articulation, the only time in the entire movement where this is the case.

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system begins at measure 14, indicated by a red bracket on the left. It features a solo part for the horn, marked *ff* and *nerveux*. The piano accompaniment is marked *sec. mf*. The second system begins at measure 4, indicated by a red bracket on the left. It features a piano part marked *sec.* and *mf*, with the instruction *cédez un peu* above the staff. The score includes various dynamic markings (*ff*, *mf*, *p*) and articulations (staccato, tenuto). Below the second system, there are additional markings: *mf*, *p*, and *retenir*.

Example 3

He also applies the term *nerveux* (nervous) to further distinguish this section from the others that employ this theme. Every other time the first measure of this familiar theme is played, no matter the instrument, it is always slurred. Poulenc's fluctuation of textures is also achieved through inconsistent application of stylistic terms. In m. 4, the horn part includes the term *tres marque* (very marked). When this exact figure is performed again in m. 16, there is no such marking, but the tenuto markings remain. It is also interesting to note that in some cases, only one of the three instrument parts may contain a stylistic term, as is seen in m. 16. Another example is found in m. 45, where he applies the term *tres rude* (very rude) to only the horn part. In other cases, Poulenc made sure to include a style term marking in all three parts, such as in m. 18 and 19 with the term *sec.* (abrupt).

Throughout his career, Francis Poulenc was regarded as an emotional man and composer. His friends and family refer to him as someone who “felt the suffering of the world and delighted in it”. His compositions certainly reflect this, and the Sonata for Horn, Trumpet and Trombone is no exception. The piece ranges in emotion from sorrow and melancholy to jubilant and humorous. Poulenc’s preference for simple nature in

qualities like melody, rhythm, and basic harmonic patterns like triads and arpeggios only enhances the piece as a whole. The divergence from the extreme elements of the 19th-century orchestral tradition is achieved but without the sacrifice of any musical impact or integrity.

This CD is a live recording of a performance by me and my excellent chamber music partners at the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra Chamber Music Hall. Although there are some mistakes at the end, it has the most realistic performance state and the warm timbre of the concert hall, so I am very happy that this piece appears on my CD. Hopefully, through my CD, more students and professionals will become more aware of the validity this piece has to the world of brass chamber music. The Sonata's place in the context of the historical development of brass chamber music is crucial. As Poulenc's only piece for brass ensemble, its impact on the development of the genre is astounding. Furthermore, it has maintained its place as a highly challenging and rewarding piece of music for both performers and audiences.



Reinhold Moritzevich Glière. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reinhold_Glière
Reinhold Moritzevich Glière (11 January 1875– 23 June 1956), was a Russian composer. He studied at the Moscow Conservatory until 1900 with Hřímalý for the violin and with Taneyev, Arensky, Konyus, and Ippolitov-Ivanov for theory and composition. From 1920 to 1941, he was a professor of composition at the conservatory, where his pupils included Davidenko, Novikov, Rakov, and other well-known Soviet composers. He served as chairman of the organizing committee of the USSR Composers' Union (1938–48). He held a doctorate in art criticism, several State Prizes (1942, 1946, 1948, 1950), and the title People's Artist of the USSR (1938), the RSFSR, the Uzbek SSR, and the Azerbaijani SSR.

Glière was a direct heir to the Russian Romantic tradition, working predominantly on a grand scale in the large forms (opera, ballet, symphony, symphonic poem, etc.). The most important element in his style is expressive melody. His ballet music is marked by particular sensitivity and beauty, colourfulness and pictorialism. In his symphonic works, he drew above all on the Russian epic tradition, that of Borodin and Glazunov. This is especially clear in his Third Symphony 'Il'ya Muromets', named after a Russian folk hero, but all his symphonies, concertos, and symphonic poems show a monumentality of image and a brilliant aural imagination.

Besides his creative work, Glière also appeared frequently as a conductor and pianist. Many of his compositions have entered the standard repertoire, and he is considered the founder of Soviet ballet.

Glière's op. 35, composed in 1908, is a collection of eleven short works, written when Glière was only 34 years old. This marks a relatively early piece in the composer's total output. It is worth noting that this piece was originally written for clarinet and piano; after that, it was transcribed by L. Perminov for horn and piano.

Glière also composed a very famous horn concerto, Concerto for horn and orchestra in B-flat major, Op. 91 (1951), which was also the final round of the horn competition of the International Tchaikovsky Music Competition.

Chapter 6. The Chinese music section of my CD.

The four periods of 20th-century Chinese classical music feature special characteristics. For example, during the New Culture Movement, artists tried to break the limitations of the old society, and composers began to combine Chinese and Western music with some innovations. In this period, Chinese classical music is characterized by the composers having a choice of a variety of styles and genres, and the singers were free to explore new styles. Songs that could only be sung in the traditional way (folk songs) could now be sung as art songs in new arrangements, so that Chinese folk songs integrated Western art-song styles along with new original art songs. During the period of the Sino-Japanese War, due to the invasion of the country by Japan, the music of this period was about the war, and the composers wrote works that were widely sung, which greatly inspired the soldiers. From the 1950s to the 1970s, just after the Second World War and the founding of the country, most of the vocal works of this period were composed to describe and encourage the construction of the country. From the 1980s to 2000, Chinese classical music entered a new period of development and integration. Composers wrote songs with more individual style according to their own preferences, and there are fewer constraints and restrictions.

New Culture Movement (1919-1927)

After the Xinhai Revolution (1912), Chinese society experienced a large change, and the voice of opposition to imperialism and feudalism became stronger and stronger. In terms of culture and ideology, China's advanced intellectuals, represented by Cai Yuanpei (1868-1940) and Chen Duxiu (1879-1942), set off a national movement to inspire more outside influences into the Chinese culture — the New Culture Movement. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, a large number of new Chinese intellectuals went abroad to specialize in Western music, and after returning to China, they devoted themselves to the development of Chinese music.

SINO-JAPANESE WAR (1937-1949)

The War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression refers to World War II in the mid-20th century. Internationally, it is known as the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Japanese War of Aggression against China. The central theme of the musical works of this period was the struggle for the survival of the nation. The issue of nationalization and popularization had attracted the attention of musicians, and a large number of lyrical works appeared. The new compositions were more obviously influenced by various folk songs in terms of tone and musical form, and the dominant ones were militant patriotic songs.

The Yellow River Cantata was written in 1939, during a period of great suffering following Japan's invasion of China. It tapped into the Chinese people's deep yearning to become a strong nation, free from foreign exploitation.

***Thinking of You* was written in 1926.**

***Family Song* was written in 1935.**

***The Yellow River Cantata* was written in 1939.**

***In That Far Away Place* was written in 1941.**

***Red Beans* was written in 1943.**

***Kangding Love Song* was written in 1946.**

***Remember Me* was written in 1982.**

***Great Ocean, My Sweet Home* was written in 1982.**

***Song of Yangtze River* was written in 1984.**

Important Historical Moments in China.

The Republic of China was founded in January 1912.

The People's Republic of China was founded in October 1949.



Yuanren Zhao.

Source:<https://www.chinawriter.com.cn/n1/2023/0725/c404064-40042716.html>

Yuanren Zhao (November 3, 1892 - February 24, 1982) was a Han Chinese national, originally from Wujin, Jiangsu Province (now Changzhou). He was a descendant of the Qing Dynasty poet Zhao Yi. He was born in Tianjin in 1892. Modern scholar, linguist, and musician.⁵

Yuanren Zhao taught at Cornell University, Harvard University, Tsinghua University, Academia Sinica, University of Hawaii, Yale University, University of Michigan, and later taught at the University of California and retired from Berkeley. He was fluent in English, French, German, and other foreign languages and was a pioneer of modern Chinese linguistics, known as the 'father of modern Chinese linguistics.' His music creation broke through the mode of Chinese traditional style, borrowing foreign music styles to set Chinese lyrics. He began to combine Western harmonies and structures with traditional Chinese music, leading Chinese modern music to a new level of development. Therefore, he is one of the well-deserved pioneers in the history of modern Chinese music and an outstanding composer in the early 20th century in China.

Yuanren Zhao is a linguist who earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in mathematics from Cornell University in 1914 before completing his Ph.D. from Harvard Graduate School in 1918. He was a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was elected President of the Linguistic Society of America. According to William S-Y. Wang, Zhao had a classical Chinese education at home and had a love for language, fluently speaking several Chinese dialects as well as German, French and Japanese. He had reading knowledge of a few other Chinese dialects and ancient Greek and Latin. His parents also contributed to his love of music. His mother sang Chinese opera, and his father taught him the Chinese flute. While his academic discipline is in mathematics, he has always filled his life with music. Although never a conservatory student, he took lessons in harmony, counterpoint, and piano, sang in choirs, and went to many concerts. His compositional technique was mainly self-taught. He diligently structured his music in conformity with the poem and changed some words in the text so that the audience

⁵ Sun, Jinan. *Appreciation of Chinese and Foreign Famous Songs*. Shandong Education Press, 1987.

would be able to understand it. Yuanren Zhao died in Cambridge, Massachusetts, at age 89 (1982).

Yuanren Zhao composed 148 pieces, of which 141 were songs, including art songs and chorus repertoires. Yuanren Zhao's representative songbook, *New Poetry Songbook*, was published in 1928 as a 14-song collection with the majority of lyrics from modern Chinese poems. Also, Chinese music pedagogue Youmei Xiao has described Zhao as China's Schubert. Among the music works published in the past ten years, Yuanren Zhao's *New Poetry Songbook* should be the most valuable. Although Zhao has not always specialized in music, he has a talent for music, an intelligent mind, and a subtle sense of hearing. Zhao composed such Schubert-style art songs, which opened a new ear for the music industry in our country, and it is worthy of our admiration."

Yuanren Zhao was artistically innovative and bold. His songs feature vivid musical imagery, novel styles, graceful and flowing melodies, and are rich in lyricism. In terms of content, many of his works incorporate both the characteristics of the era and a national style. In terms of form, his works effectively employed Western compositional techniques while creatively absorbing valuable experiences from traditional Chinese music. His music compositions reached a high artistic level and made significant contributions to the development of modern Chinese music. Many of his works are still performed today in music schools and at concerts.

Yuanren Zhao was also the earliest composer in the history of modern Chinese music to arrange Chinese folk songs for polyphonic performance.

The Chinese People's Education Press commented on him: Yuanren Zhao's songs feature vivid musical imagery, innovative styles, graceful and smooth melodies, and lyrical richness. He was adept at adopting European techniques of modern polyphonic composition while continuously exploring and preserving the unique features of traditional Chinese culture and music. He paid great attention to the tonal and phonetic characteristics of the lyrics, ensuring that the phonetics of the words matched the melody, resulting in songs that were both musical and conversational in tone, creating a unique style. Moreover, he absorbed elements of folk musical language into his compositions and made valuable experiments in the nationalization of harmony, often using techniques such as parallel fourths and fifths, added sixths to major triads, minor sevenths, and modal harmonies. He also paid careful attention to the role of piano accompaniment in jointly shaping the imagery and mood of the song.

Song composition—especially art songs and choral works—was the main focus of Yuanren Zhao's creative output. These works demonstrate his emphasis on learning from the compositional experiences of modern Europe, particularly in harmony. He was one of the earliest Chinese composers to recognize the expressive potential of harmonic color and to understand the concept of "tonal emotion."

The most significant feature of Yuanren Zhao's song compositions was his bold exploration of a national musical language, particularly in the integration of lyrics and melody and in the nationalization of Western polyphonic techniques. Among modern Chinese composers, Yuanren Zhao was the earliest to focus on creating a music language with a national style. He was also one of the first composers to draw from folk

tunes and extensively incorporate the tonal elements of poetic recitation, folk opera, and storytelling into his works. As a scholar specializing in Chinese language and phonetics, he paid close attention to integrating the phonetic features of the Chinese language into his musical creations.

Yuanren Zhao explicitly pointed out that simply applying Western polyphony—especially harmonic techniques—to Chinese melodies resulted in stylistic inconsistencies. Therefore, experiments in nationalization were necessary. His large body of work demonstrates that he was not only the boldest among Chinese composers in addressing this issue, but also the most technically accomplished. Importantly, his use of these techniques was not merely a matter of composition method, but an integral part of shaping artistic imagery and expressing artistic emotion.

“How Can I Not Think of Her” was Yuanren Zhao’s most frequently performed song and was collected in Zhao’s New Poetry Songbook. Through the depiction of the four seasons, Bannong Liu expresses his longing for the motherland.

“How Can I Not Think of Her” has various translations,
The one I use on my CD is “Thinking of You”.



Lyricist:

Bannong Liu (1891–1934), a new-style poet, essayist, and renowned linguist. His Experimental Record of Chinese Phonetics was awarded the "Constantine Linguistics Prize." He was the first Chinese linguist to receive this international award.

In 1920, he went to study linguistics at the University of London in the UK. During this time, far from his homeland and missing his loved ones, he wrote this deeply emotional poem. The original title of the poem was Love Song, which was later changed to How Can I Not Think of Her. Liu was the first person to use the word “her” to represent his beloved one, because the ideogram “he” was only for all third-person singular pronouns in ancient Chinese. Bannong Liu pioneered the use of “she” to refer to females in How Can I Not Think of Her, and this usage gained wide recognition in society.

Because of its harmonious rhythm and fluent language, the poem was set to music in 1926 by the renowned linguist Yuanren Zhao.

The melody of this song is graceful and full of emotion. On one hand, it adopts the techniques of traditional Chinese opera, rich in Chinese flavor. On the other hand, it incorporates Western musical structure, modulation, and polyphonic techniques, expressing a deeply woven sentiment of yearning and desire. "How Can I Not Think of Her" has become a classic art song in the treasury of modern Chinese music and is also a distinguished teaching piece in professional music institutions. The song highlights the passionate pursuit of individuality and romantic freedom among Chinese youth at the time, striving to present a new artistic conception and style distinct from that of traditional literature and art. In *How Can I Not Think of Her*, traditional folk song techniques of repetition are employed. Although the poet inherits traditional methods of repetition and metaphor in composition, the language is vivid and dynamic, the imagery fresh and unique, making readers feel as if they can see the person and hear his voice, with lingering meaning and resonant charm. In terms of associative power and suggestiveness, the poet seems to have been somewhat influenced by Western Symbolist poetry.

Bannong Liu was among the first (as early as 1918) to advocate the collection, compilation, and preservation of China's rich folk song heritage. He actively engaged in this work through long-term field studies and contributions. The influence of folk songs on Liu's poetry can be seen in this poem.

All four sections of the piece are built on the foundation of E major as the main key, but appropriate key modulations and changes are skillfully applied in different sections. For example, the second section begins in E major but ends in its dominant key, B major. After a piano interlude, it returns to the main key. The third section starts in E major, modulates to the parallel minor key E minor, and ends in G major. The fourth section begins in the parallel minor key, E minor, and concludes in its parallel major key, E major, thus achieving a unified return to the main key. This results in a tonal structure that is based on the main key and incorporates various key relationships.

Structurally, Yuanren Zhao's musical setting corresponds to the poetic construct—sectional with repeated texts set to slightly varied refrains. In the opening phrases, a pedal tone on E₃ in the piano part (mm. 1-12) firmly established the tonal center for the entire piece. While using the standard harmonic progressions in the accompaniment, Zhao achieved a Chinese-sounding melodic line by avoiding the pitches a and d-sharp, the fourth and the seventh note of the E major scale.

At the entrance of the second stanza (m. 22), the E₃ pedal tone returns. The melodic line remains in the pentatonic mode as the tonality gradually shifts into the dominant B major. A four-bar instrumental extension (mm. 37-40) concludes the first half of the song.

The opening introduction returns in m. 41. Although the E₃ pedal tone and the E major chord progression recur (mm. 40-52), the music lines from mm. 44-51 are centered

around c-sharp, the tonic of the relative minor key. The key signature changes to one sharp in m. 53, indicating a shift to the parallel E minor. The repeated a-sharps in the new phrases (mm. 53-55) push the tonality toward the dominant B minor before settling into G major, the relative key of E minor. (mm. 57-58).

After a brief interlude (mm. 58-62) in G pentatonic major, the fourth and last stanza begins in E minor. The darker harmonic tone was enhanced by a meter change from triple to quadruple, slowing down the musical movements (mm. 62-66). The triple meter is restored. The song ends with a strong ending in E major.

I attach the complete score of this piece of music at the end of the dissertation.

Please note that this version of the score has violin accompaniment. The violin part is usually canceled in concerts, in which case it does not affect the normal performance.

Lyric:

Wispy clouds float in the sky, a Light breeze on the ground.

Ah! A light breeze caresses my hair. How can I not think of her?

The moonlight is loving the sea, The sea is loving the moonlight.

Ah! On this silvery night as sweet as honey, how can I not think of her?

On the water, fallen petals are slowly flowing, and in the water, fish are slowly swimming.

Ah! Swallow, what are you saying? How can I not think of her?

Withered trees trembling in the cold wind, Brushfire smoldering in the dusk.

Ah! The western sky still shows a lingering glow. How can I not think of her?



Zi Huang. Source:<https://www.shcmusic.edu.cn/2024/0326/c2781a50571/page.htm>

Zi Huang was a representative of academism composer and music educator of the 20th century in China. He was born in 1904 in Jiangsu, China. In 1916, Huang was accepted into Peking Tsinghua College, a preparatory school for students to study abroad in the U.S. He started to learn Western music by singing as the second tenor in the school choir and playing clarinet in the brass band. In 1920, Huang began to learn harmony composition and attended piano lessons in 1922. Huang graduated from Tsinghua College at the age of twenty. As one of the top students, Huang was sponsored by the Chinese government and studied at Oberlin College, majoring in psychology with a minor in music. After receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in May 1926, Huang continued his education in music theory and composition at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in the Fall. Due to the grief of his lover Yongfu Hu's death, Huang decided to transfer to Yale University in September of 1928. In 1929, on the anniversary of Yongfu Hu's death, Huang completed his orchestral overture *In Memoriam*, which was a composition dedicated to his lover Hu and was the first symphony composed by a Chinese composer.⁶ This composition was premiered in May 1929 at the Yale University graduation concert under Huang's mentor, David Stanley Smith's baton, and performed by the Yale Student Band and Newport Symphony Orchestra. Huang graduated with a Bachelor's in Music degree from Yale University and was accepted for a music faculty job at Shanghai Hujiang University. A year later, Xiao Youmei hired Huang as a music faculty and dean of academic affairs at the National Music Academy (now known as Shanghai Conservatory of Music). Huang taught all the music theory and composition courses for the first seven years, since not enough faculty could teach those courses. He has trained a group of outstanding composers. He composed a bunch of composition works reflecting different genres, such as art song, oratorio, symphony, and film music. Beyond teaching and musical composition, Huang wrote several music textbooks and journal articles. Unfortunately, Huang's extraordinary life and career ended in April 1938 at his age of 34 due to Typhoid Fever.

Zi Huang spared no effort in promoting the development of Chinese music. Among his works, the most influential are undoubtedly his art songs. He expertly integrated poetry

⁶ Zhou, Zhushuan. *Compendium of the General History of Chinese Music*. Shandong Education Press, 1991.

and musical language. His songs remain popular and are often performed in recital. The distinctive feature of art songs lies in their use of an integrated composition technique combining "music, poetry, and piano accompaniment," forming a highly artistic song format. The creation of art songs in the first half of the 20th century in China involved integrating the compositional techniques of Western countries such as Germany and Austria into Chinese musical traditions, forming a song style with national characteristics. Franz Schubert is a representative and exemplar of Western art songs, while Zi Huang, having conducted his in-depth study based on Schubert's legacy, represents a pinnacle among Chinese composers in the realm of art songs. When composing art songs, Zi Huang emphasized the combination of lyrics and music and excelled at using refined musical language to express the artistic conception of poetry. The lyrics he selected were rich in poetic quality and artistic value. Zi Huang was a renowned modern Chinese composer, music theorist, and educator. He was also the first professional composer in China to systematically and comprehensively teach specialized composition techniques and music theory. He made an indelible contribution to the establishment of professional music institutions in China. Many accomplished contemporary Chinese musicians were once students of Zi Huang. During his short life of only 34 years, he created many outstanding musical works and theoretical writings. Looking at his life as a whole, Zi Huang achieved brilliant success in both musical composition and education, setting a shining example for future generations. His contributions to the development of modern Chinese musical culture and their impact far transcend the limits of time and space.

Notable Opinions

Yuanren Zhao's evaluation of Zi Huang: "Zi Huang's melodies are smooth"; "Zi Huang's harmonies are mostly plain, just like his personality"; "His strength lies in his ability to make each work authentically reflect its intended style, always highly appropriate, always highly singable. I once called him the most singable composer in modern China. Because of this, I support the idea that today's composition students should allocate at least a small part of their time spent studying Schubert, Brahms, and others to pay some attention to Zi Huang's music."

Well-known Chinese composer Xue'an Liu: "Although my mentor Zi Huang was usually a man of few words, when it came to mentoring students and nurturing the budding field of Chinese music education, he was modest, kind, approachable, and patient, making everyone around him feel a sense of closeness. Though a professor, he never assumed an air of superiority, nor was he ever irritated with others. Instead, he spoke with ease, encouraged questions, guided with care, and inspired broad thinking; both humorous and tireless in his teaching."

Luting He, president of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music: "Zi Huang was the first to systematically and comprehensively teach modern Western composition techniques and theories to Chinese students, and he had the aspiration to establish a Chinese national music genre. Without the teachings of Mr. Zi Huang, I could not have achieved anything in music composition. This is something all the older generation of musicians who studied under him deeply understand."

It is worth mentioning that today, on the campus of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music (the author's alma mater), a monument featuring the statue of Zi Huang still stands proudly.



The Statue of Zi Huang on the campus of Shanghai Conservatory of Music.

The theme song “Family Song” composed by Zi Huang for the feature film Tianlun, was a widely influential lyrical solo piece of considerable length and accessible musical language at the time.

(2) 天倫歌

Violin Piano
Cello

歌
鋼琴

慢 傷感 連切

2nd Ppa
1st Ppa

人皆有父，弱我獨多？人皆有母，弱我獨多？

a tempo

雲 悠 悠，江 水 東 流。 小 楊 柳 春 風 輕 暖，

多 策；兒 欲 歸 去， 已 無 舟。 二 何 處 是 歸 源

F415

The Manuscript of Family Song
Source: Shanghai Conservatory of Music Archives

Lyrics

Everyone has a father / only I have none /

Everyone has a mother / only I have none /

The white clouds drift lazily along / the river waters / flow to the east /

The tiny bird returns home / but no longer has a nest /

The child wants to return home / but no longer has a boat /

Oh, where to seek the source / oh, where to seek the source /

/Say not that the child is an abandoned lamb /

Say not that the child has cried out its heart /

The tragedies of this world / are hardly limited to losing one's father and mother /

Arise, oh ye orphans / Awaken / ye lost lambs /

Put away your moans of anguish /

Show your red-blooded determination /

Elders, oh elders/elders among men /

Youth oh youth/youth among men /

Put away your moans of anguish /

Show your red-blooded determination /

Serve and sacrifice / serve and sacrifice /

Sacrifice yourself for mankind / without distinctions /

The rolling waters of the river / the drifting white clouds /

The magnificent universe / has endured since time immemorial /

The Brotherhood of Man / together let us share / heaven's order!



Xinghai Xian. Source: http://www.xinhuanet.com/mrdx/2021-05/24/c_139966340.htm

Xinghai Xian was born in Portuguese Macau in 1905. He moved frequently in his early life with his mother, as his father had died before Xinghai Xian was born. Xinghai Xian moved with his mother to Singapore when he was six years old, he was enrolled in Yangzheng Primary School for his primary education. It was while at Yangzheng Primary School that he took his first step into his musical career. His teacher, Ou Jianfu, first noticed Xinghai Xian's musical talent, and he was enrolled in the school's military band. Xinghai Xian received training in both musical instruments as well as musical theory. He was later brought to Guangzhou for further education by his then-school principal, Linyao Xing, along with 19 other students. Xinghai Xian started learning the clarinet in 1918 at the YMCA charity school attached to Lingnan University in Guangzhou (Canton).⁷

In 1926, he joined the National Music Institute at Peking University to study music, and in 1928, he entered the National Shanghai Conservatory of Music to study violin and piano. The same year, he published his well-known essay *The Universal Music*. In 1929, he went to Paris (where he met Sicong Ma, who introduced him to many artists there) and in 1934 became the first Chinese student to be admitted to the Paris Conservatory to study senior composition with Paul Dukas.

⁷ Sun, Jinan. *Appreciation of Chinese and Foreign Famous Songs*. Shandong Education Press, 1987.



Xinghai Xian in Paris, France.

Source: <http://www.yellowrivercantata.com/OldPhotos.html>

Xinghai Xian finished his studies from Paul Dukas' Advanced Composition class in 1935 and returned to China after Dukas' death in the same year. During his five years of study in France, Xinghai Xian studied in depth the compositional techniques of modern Western music, enriched his musical training, and broadened his artistic horizons. He became part of the Shanghai Songwriters' Association and produced many songs with nationalistic themes. It was in Shanghai where he met the lyricist/poet

Weiran Guang and first began their collaboration. After the battle of Shanghai, Xinghai Xian and Weiran Guang left Shanghai separately, only to reunite in Wuhan, where they were both part of the No. 3 Office of the Political Department of the Military Affairs Commission. They mainly composed anti-war propaganda songs and traveled to the countryside to teach the peasantry these songs. Then he traveled to Yan'an and began his most prolific compositional period. Weiran Guang arrived in Yan'an shortly after Xinghai Xian and composed a long poem that became the text for Xinghai Xian's *Yellow River Cantata*, an orchestral choral composition that would become a symbol of Chinese nationalism, and is still one of the most performed Chinese choral-orchestral compositions by both Chinese and Western choruses. Xinghai Xian wrote in his article *Overview of the recent Chinese Choral Singing Movement* that choral singing was not simply singing, it was a vehicle to unite people, a "weapon to fight the enemy" and "food for the soul during war times." In 1940, he was sent to the Soviet Union and died there in 1945.

Recalling his life in Paris, Xian Xinghai wrote:

"I studied as a part-time student while working as a freelance musician, restaurant waiter, even a beautician in nail salons... The famous Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev gave me much help, as well as the daughter of the Russian author Turgenev. I matriculated into the highest class for composition and conducting at the Conservatoire National de Musique et de Déclamation. Professor Dukas loved me and protected me, and arranged for me to eat in the cafeteria for free. Everyone in the Conservatory was very helpful until I completed both composition and conducting classes..."

He is hailed as the "people's composer," partially because he came from a poor working family of a single parent, had to struggle from a very young age to pursue a formal musical education, also because his music contains tuneful melodies that resembles folk songs and are easy for people to remember—thus easily appreciated by the ordinary Chinese people without requiring an advanced level of sophistication. The *Yellow River Cantata* is a prime example of his ability to turn an erudite poem into a choral work that people of all levels of education could enjoy.

He was among the first composers in his country to draw on Western classical music and has influenced many later Chinese musicians. During Xinghai Xian's career, he composed over 300 works and published 35 papers, including *Er Nie: Creator of New Chinese Music*. Xinghai Xian composed a large number of inspirational patriotic songs, which became the spiritual weapon of the Chinese nation to resist the enemy and save the country. Xinghai Xian composed in all the major musical forms (two symphonies, a violin concerto, four large-scale choral works, nearly 300 songs, and an opera).

Xinghai Xian was long fascinated by folk songs, even teaching a course on "folk song studies" while in Yan'an. In one of his lectures, he discussed, in detail, the usage of folk music("improper music") by the court and learned scholars throughout history. He also

examined folk songs from different regions and ethnicities, including the Western tradition of the Jongleurs, troubadours, and Meistersingers. He gave a brief report of different Western composers' usage of folk music, such as Tchaikovsky and Dvořák, and composers whose music became the “folk songs” of the nation, such as Stephen Foster, and composers whose music became a symbol of nationalism, such as Brahms and his *Ein Deutsches Requiem*. Through these comparisons, he concluded that folk music can become art, and that Chinese new music needed to draw its materials from the rich treasures of traditional Chinese folk music. He wrote, “In terms of melody, Chinese folksong is filled with passion, it is more interesting than any other nation's folk songs...because of technical limitations, it is one-dimensional. Because of their beautiful melodies, some of our folk songs have survived thousands of years, and people still love them...”

“Folk songs can be composed,” said Xinghai Xian in his lecture, “a learned composer who experienced much struggle in real life and had a close relationship with the working class can compose folk songs.” He imagined that one style of composed folk music could represent the entire nation and become the basis for a national style. He believed that the answer to Chinese choral music could be found in China's rich folk-music tradition. Perhaps because he made such an effort in collecting folk songs, and because his compositions were filled with folk-song-like melodies, he became a favorite composer in China.



Weiran Guang.

Source: <http://www.musiceol.com/news/html/2015-8/20158611501536164986.html>

The Birth of the Cantata

According to Wu Xi-Ling's account, the No. 3 Performance Troupe left Wuhan, heading northwest to Yan'an, after the Japanese took the city in October of 1938. During the two months of their arduous journey on foot, they witnessed much suffering of the people displaced by war, as well as the harsh conditions under which the people were living. The lyricist and poet Weiran Guang, inspired by the power of the Yellow River as well as the strength and the determination of the boatman who worked on the river, wrote his long poem in five days after arriving in Yan'an. Once there, Weiran Guang invited Xinghai Xian to attend a poetry reading, at which time he asked if Xinghai Xian would compose music for this poem. Xinghai Xian, at the time, was working on another cantata and symphony, as well as collecting folk songs that he heard. Despite his heavy workload, Xinghai Xian took the text and composed the cantata in only six days, during which time he met with Weiran Guang daily, writing and revising several movements to meet Weiran Guang's approval.

The composition was premiered thirteen days later on April 13th.

Xinghai Xian wrote in his Notes for Composition:

"This composition was written in a small 'yao dong' in Lu Yi (Lu Xun Arts Academy), because the No. 3 Performance Troupe was in a hurry to leave Yan'an, I finished the chorus and the full score in five to six days. Because people in many areas, including both war and peace zones, all like this cantata, I always wanted to rewrite it utilizing proper staff notation, re-orchestrating it with a Western orchestral instrumentation, which would be far better than the version in Chev  notation, but because of teaching and composing, did not find the time to do so. But since the spring of 1941, I have successfully finished it. This orchestration can be used by Europeans or Americans, and is much more universal than the one in Chev , but at the same time, this composition is the national style and improved in technique."⁸

According to a former student, Chong Tian, Xinghai Xian loved folk music. Tian recalled that ever since the first time that they met, Xinghai Xian would sing southern folk songs to his students. During the time of completing the Cantata, Tian remembered that Xinghai Xian was working on another cantata as well as a symphony, and collecting folk songs that he heard from the farmers. In his article Ode to An Era – Remembering Comrade Xinghai Xian composing "Ode to the Yellow River", Tian recalled himself asking if Xinghai Xian would rewrite a movement to more closely resemble an authentic folk-song character. Xinghai Xian answered: "You know I love folk songs, especially folk songs of this region, that's why folksong fills each movement of the Production Cantata. I tried to compose this movement with a folk song first, but it did not work, so I tore it up. Because the lyricist intended to exalt the Yellow River. When talking about exaltation, people often think of songs of praise. I studied Western music in a foreign country, I can't write this ode like a hymn in a church, so I thought of looking for suitable melodic materials, but that did not work as well, ancient melodies can't express the yellow River's magnificence and the lyricist's intensions!"

⁸ Zhang, Suzhi. *The Composition and Performance Process of "Yellow River Cantata"*. Music Time, 2012.



The Yellow River. Source: <http://hhhkpb.com/index3.html>

At more than three thousand miles in length, the Yellow River is second only to the Yangtze River as China's longest waterway. The yellowish-brown hue that gives the river its name comes from the massive amounts of silt (loess) picked up as the waters rush eastward to the sea. Called "Mother River of the Chinese nation" and "the cradle of the Chinese civilization," the Yellow River is as vital a resource for China as the Nile is for Egypt. Farming villages began to spring up in the Yellow River valley in the Neolithic era (around 9500 BC). Dynasties since have either flourished from effective control of the river or fallen as a result of its floods.

Just as the Wisla River to Warsaw, the Yellow River joins Chinese hearts everywhere to their homeland, history, and roots. Beyond its importance in providing water for agriculture and hydroelectric power, the Yellow River nurtures the spirit and strength of the Chinese people.



Concert of the Yellow River Cantata by the Hukou Falls of the Yellow River in 2024

Source:

<https://sx.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202404/12/WS66189973a3109f7860dd91cf.html>

Overview of the Cantata

There are eight movements in this cantata, and “each movement is part of a collection of paintings that present the Yellow River as the symbol of the heroic Chinese Nation.” The cantata takes its listener on a journey that begins on the banks of the Yellow River.

Second Movement: "Ode to the Yellow River"

This is a solo piece for baritone or tenor, and it is a passionate hymn of praise. The music is magnificent, ardent, profound, and touching, full of grand and unrestrained passion. The first section praises the majestic appearance of the Yellow River; the second section praises China's five-thousand-year-old culture; the third section praises the unyielding and great spirit of the Chinese nation. The text illustrates the beauty, grandeur, and verve of the river, praising it as the cradle of the nation and source of strength, as if a “heroic child of our motherland sings her praises, vowing to follow her example to become resilient and powerful.”

Recitation Ah! My friends!

The heroic spirit of the Yellow River dominates the plains of Asia, representing the vigor of our nation, mighty and strong!

Here, facing the Yellow River, we sing our song of praise.

Solo

I stand on the mountain peak,
gazing at the Yellow River rolling towards the southeast.
Golden waves surge, lofty waters rise.
Muddy swirling rapids mark its sinuous course
down from the Kunlun mountain, rushing toward the Yellow Sea,
dividing the central plains of China into southern and northern parts.
Ah, Yellow River!

You are the cradle of the Chinese people!

You have nurtured five thousand years of ancient culture,

Many heroic tales have taken place on your shores!

Ah, Yellow River!

You are mighty and strong, like a giant.

You appear on the plains of Asia, using your heroic physique to build our people's defense.

Ah, Yellow River! You rush along to the horizon, majestic,
extending your arms like countless strips of iron towards both northern and southern shores.

Our people's mighty spirit will flourish under your nurture!

Fourth Movement: "Ballad of the Yellow River"

This is a lyrical two-part female chorus in a folk-song style, composed in a modified ternary form. The first section, with a gentle and tender melody, depicts the people on both sides of the Yellow River laboring and living on this land for generations, expressing the deep love of the sons and daughters of the Yellow River for their homeland and their yearning for a peaceful life. The second section has deep and mournful music, using a mixed chorus to voice the anguished moans of the suffering compatriots. The third section is a shortened reprise of the melody, continuing to express the suffering of the people along the Yellow River with an even more mournful tone and emotion. The Yellow River still flows on, but the suffering of the people grows deeper. This movement, originally written for women, illustrates the happy lives of the people who reside along the river, whose lives are destroyed by the Japanese invasion in 1937.

Recitation

We are sons and daughters of the Yellow River, who arduously strive toward victory with each passing day!

But each day that the enemy lives is one more day that we cannot rest. If you doubt this, then listen to the painful groans of the multitudes on the river to the east.

Chorus

Yellow water, rushing eastward, flowing for ten thousand miles. Swift waters, high waves, and racing rapids sound like cries of tigers and wolves.

Open canals and build embankments, 27 for to the east lies level soil fertile for sprouting wheat and fragrant soy flowers. Men and women, young and old, live in happy prosperity.

But since the enemy came, these common people have suffered great calamities! Treachery, wickedness, burning, and murder create a desert of desolation; people escorting the elderly and carrying the young disperse in all directions to flee death;

Losing fathers and mothers, they are unable to return to their home villages!

Yellow waters rush along day and night, as families are torn apart!



Xinghai Xian Conducting the Yellow River Cantata.

Source: <https://culture.china.com/artnews/11159887/20210825/39921181.html>

In 2019, the renowned conductor Mariss Jansons collaborated with Lang Lang to present a concert of the piano version of The Yellow River Cantata, composed by Xinghai Xian. The orchestra was the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra. It is well worth appreciating, and the video link available online is: "<https://youtu.be/D-vE5c0nZwE?si=sDqQl0yK18a8GAx7>".

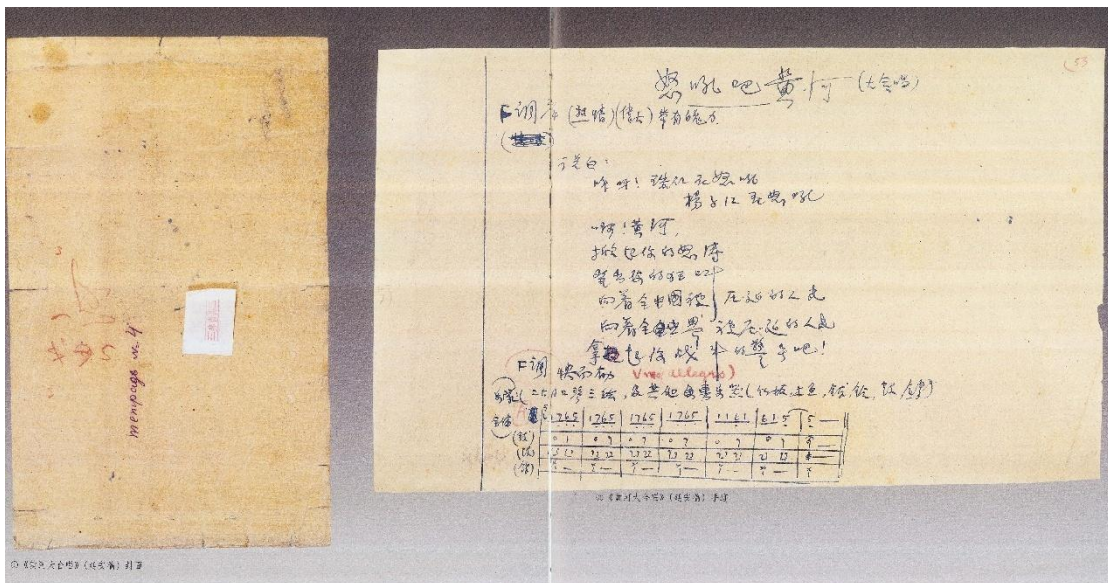


Me and the Most Famous Chinese Pianist - Lang Lang

In the interview, world-famous pianist Lang Lang said: The Yellow River Cantata holds an unshakable historical position in China. It is rare for a single piece of music to resonate with all Chinese people, but this work can unite the soul of the entire Chinese nation, making it a truly rare piece. The success of The Yellow River Cantata lies in several aspects. Firstly, it carries a distinctly Chinese flavor, such as in the piece Ballad of the Yellow River. At the same time, it was created during a special period, which gives it an extraordinary appeal. Musical works with such cohesive power are very rare even in the global music scene. This piece has become one with the blood in my veins. When I perform it, I do so with a heartfelt love, and as I grow older, this love only deepens. The Yellow River holds immense significance for the Chinese people. The Yellow River Cantata is a symbol of the power of unity among the people of China.

The Manuscript of Xinghai Xian's The Yellow River Cantata

Source: Shanghai Conservatory of Music Archives



(總譜)

黃河大合唱

"YELLOW RIVER"

Cantata

光未然作詞

冼星海作曲

Words by Kuang Wei Jian

Music by Sin Sing Hai

Handwritten musical score for a symphony. The score includes staves for various instruments and vocal parts. The tempo is marked *Allegro* and the mood is *ma no troppo*. The instruments listed are:

- Violino I.
- Violino II
- Viola
- Violoncello
- Basso
- Flauto
- Clarinetto
- Fagotto
- Contrabbasso
- Organo

The score is written in Italian and features various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Handwritten musical score for a symphony, titled "Symphony No. 1 (1888)". The score includes a table of musical notation and a list of instruments.

Instrument List:

- Flauto
- Clarinetto
- Fagotto
- Contrabbasso
- Organo

Table of Musical Notation:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
(10)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
(11)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
(12)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
(13)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
(14)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
(15)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
(16)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
(17)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100



Luobin Wang. Source: <http://www.wangluobin.com/spjszx>

Luobin Wang (1913-1996)

One of China's most celebrated national musicians in the 20th century.

Native of Beijing, Luobin Wang graduated from the Music Department of Beijing Normal University in 1934. Four years after he transcribed the first Xinjiang folk song, *The Girl of Dabancheng* in Lanzhou, he fell in deep and everlasting love with Northwest China and lived there ever after for the rest of his life. He devoted his whole life to the collecting, transcribing, composing, and spreading of China's northwestern folk songs. Altogether, Luobin Wang's works are seven operas and some 1,000 songs, which have been included in his six published songbooks.

Most of his musical works are love songs, among which *In a Faraway Place* and *The Half Moon Is Climbing in the Sky* have been chosen as the Chinese musical classics of the 20th century and awarded "The Golden Record Prize for Outstanding Musical Composition" by the Chinese Government. Many of his other songs have spread far and wide both at home and abroad, which have enriched the treasure house of Chinese musical classics.

"*In That Far Away Place*" combines the characteristics of Tibetan folk songs, Kazakh folks, and Uyghur folk songs. The song is a love song that expresses admiration for a girl who lives in a faraway fairyland. The song was set as an episode in the 1948 Chinese film *The Spring of a Small Town*.

This song tells a romantic love story between a Han Chinese youth and a Tibetan girl. The cheerful and lively lyrics and melody elevate the meaning of love and life. It is a symbol of ethnic unity between Tibetan and Han compatriots and a cultural heritage that Luobin Wang dedicated to the people of Qinghai and even to the people of the world.

In 1992, it was rated as a “20th Century Chinese Music Classic.” In 1994, Luobin Wang received the “Special Contribution Award for Cultural Exchange Between East and West” from UNESCO for this song.

“In That Far Away Place” adopts a European seven-tone scale mode rarely seen in Han Chinese folk songs. It has the tone of Kazakh folk songs and the style of Tibetan folk songs from Qinghai. This song, full of the romantic sentiments of a Han Chinese youth, features healthy content and artistic excellence, meeting all the conditions for widespread transmission. It has therefore become an outstanding Chinese music art piece that transcends region, language, ethnicity, and era.

“In That Far Away Place” is the most widely sung song by Luobin Wang, and also one of the most widely performed Chinese songs globally. Because of this, Luobin Wang earned the title “King of Western Songs,” and the lyrics of this song, as per Luobin Wang’s will, are engraved on his tombstone. The Paris Conservatory of Music in France included this song in the curriculum of its Oriental music course.

In 1947, American singer Paul Robeson translated the song into English and performed it publicly in Shanghai. At the same time, to celebrate the victory over fascism and the founding of the United Nations, he sang two Chinese songs, “March of the Volunteers” and “In That Far Away Place,” and recorded them.

In 1952, Soviet tenor singer Bebtov sang this song in Chinese during the “Sino-Soviet Friendship Month” events, performing in cities including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Chengdu.

In 1998, during the Cross-Century Voice Concert in Taipei, China, American jazz singer Diana Ross and two of the world’s three great tenors, José Carreras and Plácido Domingo, used this song as the grand finale and performed it in many locations.

In 2007, director Feng Gao made the film *Love Song at the Horizon*, based on Luobin Wang’s experience of composing this song. On October 24 of the same year, the Chang’e 1 lunar probe satellite was launched, and it played “In That Far Away Place” in space, 380,000 kilometers away from Earth.

Lyric

In that far place, have a good girl. (There is a good girl who lives in a far place.)

When people pass by her tent, they all want to look back and see her.

Her pink smiling face looks like a red sun.

Her beautiful and moving eyes,

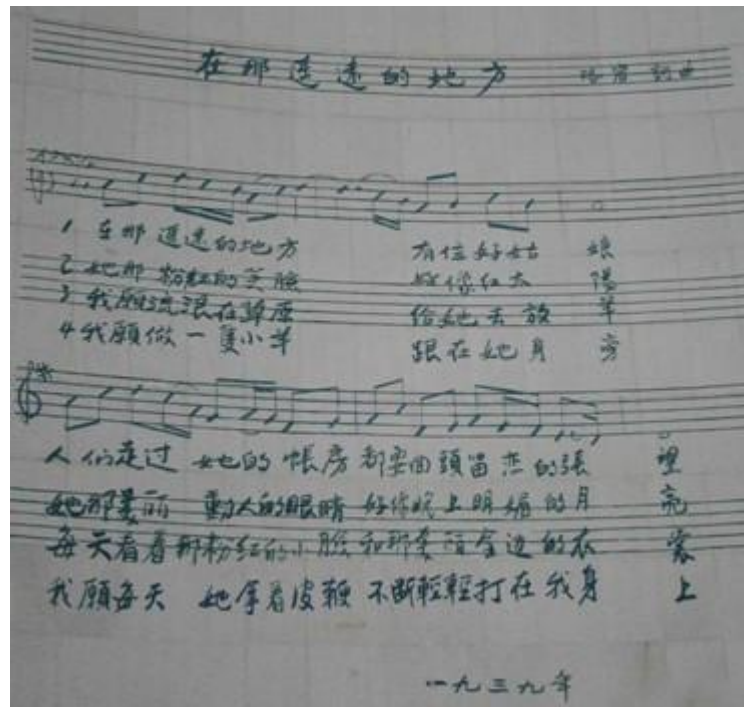
Like night bright moon (Like a bright moon in the evening.)

I would like to wander in the grassland and go herding sheep with her.

Every day, looking at the moving eyes, and the beautiful embroidered clothes with gold
(And the beautiful clothes embroidered with gold).

I would like to be a little lamb and follow her side.

I wish that every day she could hold a whip and keep slightly hitting me.



The Manuscript of “In That Far Away Place”.

Source: https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E7%8E%8B%E6%B4%9B%E5%AE%BE/502866?fromModule=lemma_inlink



Tibetan Costumes in Qinghai, China.

Source: https://news.sohu.com/a/798344542_267106

The content of classical Chinese poetry is broad and profound, with the aesthetic charm of the integration of scene and feeling, hazy beauty, implicit beauty, refined beauty, and unique flavor, creating its unique artistic appeal. Art songs of classical poetry are composed by setting classical poetry as lyrics to music, and they possess a unique artistic charm. They are artistic works that perfectly combine the poetic musical imagery and the musical poetic conception. As an important carrier of the traditional culture of the Chinese nation, their composition and performance have always received special attention and favor from composers and vocalists.

Art songs of classical poetry are art songs created using poems composed by ancient literati as lyrics. They combine the beauty of poetry with the beauty of music, integrating the musicalized poetic conception with the poetized musical imagery. They constitute an important category of Chinese art songs and have also become one of the outstanding traditional cultural heritages of the Chinese nation.



Xue'an Liu.

Source: <https://www.ccmusic.edu.cn/gyrw/3d53d5c615f94000a7b96a6a900b2eb5.htm>

Xue'an Liu (1905-1985) was a modern Chinese composer, music theorist, and music educator. He was a native of Tongliang, Sichuan (now Tongliang, Chongqing).

Xue'an Liu is a renowned musician and composer in China. He is a world-class music master listed in *The Encyclopædia Britannica: Dictionary of World Biography*. His life was full of hardships, but he always maintained his love for music. In his youth, his parents had already passed away. In his early years, with the financial support of relatives and friends, Xue'an Liu studied piano and violin at the Chengdu Academy of Fine Arts. He also learned to sing Kunqu opera and compose music. Afterwards, in 1930, he was admitted to the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. During his time at the Conservatory, he systematically studied Western theoretical composition techniques under Youmei Xiao and Zi Huang. He created early works such as *Drifting Snowflakes*, which received great appreciation from Erpin Qi. He became the first of the "Four Great Disciples" under Zi Huang. Later, after a conversation with his mentor Zi Huang—"composition should obey the needs of the nation's resistance against Japan"—and a speech by Principal Youmei Xiao—"use battle songs to unite the Chinese nation's fighting will against the enemy"—Xue'an Liu changed his compositional style, replacing the simple and elegant with brightness and liveliness, turning tender and sentimental singing into shouting with fierce determination. He composed so many anti-Japanese war songs, such as *The Ballad of the Great Wall*. He graduated from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in 1936. In October 1937, he self-funded the founding of *Battle Song*, then the only publication in the country dedicated exclusively to anti-Japanese war songs. He successively served as a professor of composition at Suzhou College of Social Education, Southern Jiangsu Institute of Arts and Education, Jiangsu Normal College, East China Normal University, Beijing Normal College of Art, and China Conservatory of Music. He composed the piano piece *Chinese Suite*.

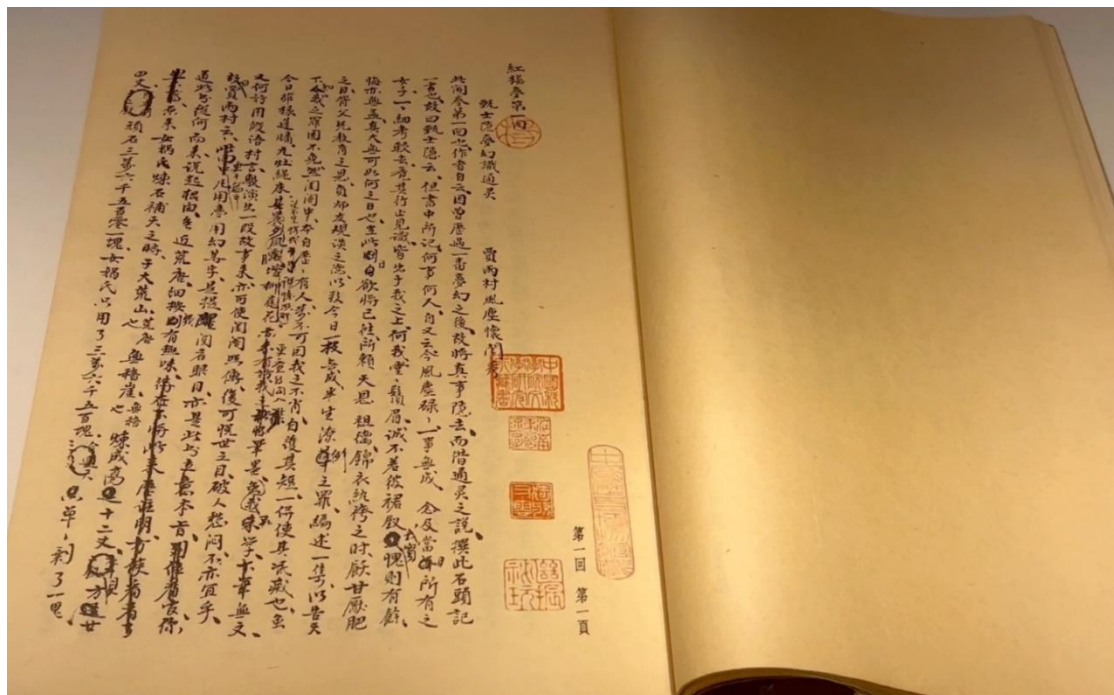


Chinese Suite. Source: <https://www.modernhistory.org.cn>

Xue'an Liu was a very important music educator and composer in 20th-century China. His life spanned significant historical periods, including the Republic of China, the War of Resistance against Japan, the Chinese Civil War, and the founding of the People's Republic of China. Despite the hardships he faced, music remained an integral part of his life.

Red Beans not only reflects Xue'an Liu's lyrical compositional style, but also his emotional expression through song. By using the love story of Daiyu Lin and Baoyu Jia, it indirectly reveals the tragic social situation of the country at that time, expressing Xue'an Liu's sorrow in facing national suffering, and resonating with the people.

Dream of the Red Chamber is an 18th-century Chinese novel authored by Xueqin Cao, considered to be one of the Four Great Masterpieces of China. It is known for its psychological scope and its observation of the worldview, aesthetics, lifestyles, and social relations of High Qing China. Xueqin Cao began composing it in the 1740s and worked on it until he died in 1763 or 1764. In his early years, his family was rich and led an extravagant life, but then his family fell into poverty. He did not become disillusioned, and with his strong perseverance and open-mindedness, he wrote Dream of Red Mansions after many years. The title has also been translated as Red Chamber Dream and A Dream of Red Mansions. Redology is the field of study devoted to the novel.



The manuscript of "Dream of the Red Chamber". Source: <https://www.chnmuseum.cn/>

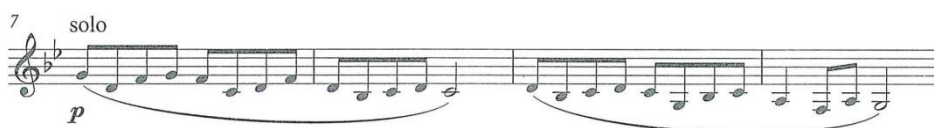
The lyrics are taken from Chapter 28 of *Dream of the Red Chamber* and are from a tune sung by the character Baoyu Jia. In this Chapter, Baoyu Jia chants out the Red Beans at a banquet to express his love for the person he misses. "Red bean" refers to the *lovesick bean*, and in the Tang dynasty poem *Red Bean* by Wei Wang, the line reads: "I hope you gather more, for this is the most evocative of love." In poetry, red beans often symbolize longing; here, they metaphorically represent blood and tears.

The song has a multi-phrase structure. The entire piece is developed around the rhythmic pattern of the first musical phrase. This rhythmic formula, combined with a circling melodic movement, expresses subtle emotions in a way that resembles both singing and reciting. The final two musical phrases are the same as the first two, creating a strong sense of unity and artistically reinforcing the theme of longing.

The entire song is built within an atmosphere of lyricism, subtlety, order, harmony, and sorrow. Therefore, the message of *Red Beans* is far from merely poetic—it conveys pain and grief. To perform it expressively, one must understand the composer's intent to grasp and express the emotional essence.

Tempo determines the mood of the entire piece, yet this is often overlooked by players. *Red Beans* is one such example. Its original tempo is *andante* (a walking pace), but many perform it as *adagio* or *lento*, which makes it lifeless and dragging to the point of dullness. Thus, control of tempo is the key to a successful performance of *Red Beans*.

Slurs are commonly used in lyrical songs to guide smooth and gentle music delivery. The phrasing should not be carelessly slurred together. The note at the beginning of a slur should be slightly emphasized, and the following notes played progressively softer, similar to a decrescendo effect.



Rests serve to enhance musical expression, especially in lyrical songs. This function is often misunderstood; many think rests are simply for breathing, which is only one of their purposes. They also serve as transitions, dramatic pauses, setups for climaxes, or moments where silence expresses more than sound. For instance, in this piece, the rests after measure 11, measure 13, and measure 19 all suggest lingering emotions. The best way to express them is to slightly shorten and soften the note before the rest, highlighting the restraint and subtlety of the phrase.





Red Beans adopts the traditional Chinese structure of beginning, continuing, turning, and closing, which is a typical Chinese folk song structure. Using “four” as the framework, it carries out logical musical expression: the first line is the original statement, the second line is developmental continuation, the turning function is reflected in the third line, and the fourth line serves as the conclusive ending. In *Red Beans*, although the overall musical structure is characterized by simplicity, it contains a certain developmental and expansive thought process, namely: beginning first, then continuation, followed by transformation, and finally integration. Each musical section is connected and progresses step by step.

The lyric:

My bleeding heart and tears of desperation drip endlessly like red beans dropping;
Yet, forever blooming spring willows and flowers are in full view at this picturesque dwelling.

Tossing and turning after dusk, for that storm strikes at the lace-screen window,
I forget not at all recent and past sorrow.

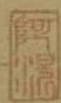
Swallowing not delicious rice and fine wine, they choke down my throat;
Looking into infinity, the ornate mirror reflects only my meagerness and despair.

My frown can't be unlocked; I endure the long and dark night.

Ah! It's just like a green mountain that's only vaguely veiled in fog,

Or a meandering emerald stream that can't be blocked!

恰似遮不住的
青山隱隱流不
斷的綠水悠悠



Red bean words written in Chinese calligraphy



Yiruo Li. Source: http://www.scsqw.org.cn/scyx/scfw/content_141812

Yiruo Li (1911-1959), whose real name is Li Tianlu, is of Han nationality and was born in Baizhang Village, Madu Township, Xuanhan County, Dazhou City, Sichuan Province. He was smart since childhood, good at poetry, and liked to play and sing. He first studied at the Suishu United Middle School in Daxian County, and then was admitted to the Sino-French University. He loved to collect and organize folk songs and create folk songs throughout his life. Among them, the most famous folk songs are "Su Erjie" and "Kangding Love Song". Yiruo Li is the lyricist of the world-famous song "Kangding Love Song" and the founder of Chinese campus songs. In 1929, when he was studying at the Sino-French University in Chengdu, he fell in love with his classmate Li Ying from Kangding and was invited to visit relatives in Kangding. Inspired by the three auspicious treasures of Kangding, "Colorful Clouds, Sun, and Moon" and love, the prince charming fell in love deeply, and the passion of his heart burst out with amazing wisdom and strength. He used the typical style of Bashan folk songs, "Liuliu Tune", to create the original ecology of "Kangding Love Song" and "Horse Racing Song", which were sung in colleges and universities in Kangding and Chengdu.

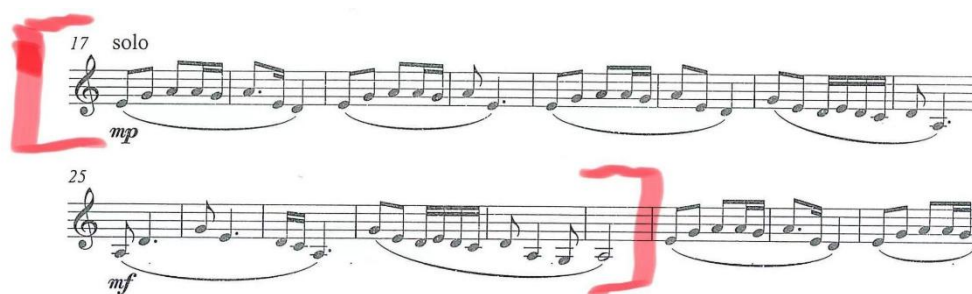
In 1952, a group of Tibetan and Han youths from Kangding performed "Kangding Love Song" at the World Festival of Youth and Students in Vienna, winning the Silver Medal. Subsequently, UNESCO recommended "Kangding Love Song" to the world as the first Chinese folk song. Within a short time, the song became globally renowned for its beautiful melody and emotional depth. In the 1970s, it was selected to represent both Chinese and world culture as the only Chinese song included in NASA's "Ten Most Representative Songs of the World." It was broadcast in space aboard the Voyager 2 spacecraft, earning praise such as "heavenly sound" and "song of the universe."

In the late 1990s, it was again honored as the only Chinese folk song included in UNESCO's list of the "Ten Most Influential Folk Songs in the World," and was recommended to countries around the globe as China's most significant folk song, even incorporated into music textbooks in many nations. In 2005, China's Shenzhou VI spacecraft carried "Kangding Love Song" into space, letting its melody resonate among the stars.

As a major hub on the Ancient Tea Horse Road, Kangding has served as a bridgehead for inter-ethnic trade and cultural exchange since the Tang Dynasty. The "Liu Liu Tune,"

which emerged during the Qianlong era of the Qing Dynasty, is one of the results of Tibetan-Han cultural integration. “Kangding Love Song” is a reflection of the region’s rich and unique tradition of love songs. Many people have been drawn to Kangding because of this song, and have come to know the city through it.⁹

The song is structured with a 4+4 phrase pattern, plus an additional line as a supplementary phrase with interjections. The main and subordinate phrases each resolve on the tonic and dominant, respectively. In each line, the first two bars use the same material, while the last two vary, mainly played in the mid-to-high register. The supplementary phrase, which begins in the lower register, is used to deepen the lyrical and emotional content. Compared with the second line, this phrase reverses the previous pattern: the first two bars vary, while the last two repeat the same material. These three musical phrases can be divided into six motives, with each motive based on the variation of the preceding one. The structural formula by motive is $aa^1 + ab + c(b^1)b$. Between the first and second lines, the head is retained and the tail is changed; between the second and third lines, the head changes and the tail is retained.



The whole song is composed in the pentatonic Yu mode (from the Shu Yu system). The melody mainly progresses stepwise, interspersed with descending fourths from scale degree 6 to 3. The range is narrow, within an octave, and the music flows smoothly and calmly.

“Kangding Love Song” is a unique folk song born in a region of mixed Han and Tibetan population. This cultural fusion between Han and Tibetan peoples is reflected in the various folk customs found in “Kangding Love Song,” which helps deepen our understanding of the song’s meaning. It contains many musical features of Sichuan folk music while also carrying subtle rhythmic and melodic elements of Tibetan music.

At the 2001 Forbidden City concert in Beijing, the world’s three great tenors — Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo, and José Carreras — chose “Kangding Love Song” for their encore performance. In a sense, this marked the song’s recognition as a “world love song.” A variety of cultural offshoots have emerged around it. The government of Garzê Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture established the “Kangding Love Song Festival” as a commemorative tourism event and created a travel project named after the Liu Liu Tune to expand the song’s cultural impact. The multicultural background of Kangding has given the song ample room for reinterpretation.

⁹ Huang, Fang. *On the Artistic Characteristics of Kang Ding Love Song*. North Music, 2017.

Lyric:

High upon the mountainside, floats a cloud so white.
There lies Kangding town, bathed in silver moonlight.
Moonlight shines bright over Kangding town.
Lovely maid with a sweet smile, Li, the woodcutter's daughter.
Zhang, the blacksmith's eldest son, came to court her in moonlight.
Moonlight shines bright, a courtship in moonlight.
First, he has fallen in love because she is talented and good-looking.
Second, he has fallen in love because she can take care of the family.
The crescent moon can take care of the family!
Lovely maidens of the world, I cannot help but love you.
Gentlemen of the world, they cannot but woo you.
Moonlight shines bright, they cannot help but woo you.

Notably, in 2022, my alma mater — the Shanghai Conservatory of Music — collaborated with the Garzê Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture Government to create and produce a major Sichuan-themed artistic project supported by the National Art Fund: an opera titled *Kangding Love Song*. It tells the moving story of Shang Yong, a university graduate who, with youthful dreams and a romantic encounter, comes to the snow-covered plateau. There, at a remote border post, he shares life and trials with a mysterious Tibetan elder Ciwang, a Tibetan girl Gama, and the duty-bound station chief Zhongyi Hong, who transitions from a wounded soldier to a local leader. On the snowy peaks, a new China's road stretches forth, with every kilometer guarded by the soul of a martyr.

Changyong Liao, president of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, served as artistic director and chief planner; Xianglin Zhou, head of composition and conducting, and Ding Ying, principal of the affiliated middle school, composed the score; Li Ting, a top-tier playwright, served as director and scriptwriter; and Professor Guoyong Zhang conducted.

On October 22, 2024, the concert version of the original musical *Kangding Love Song* was magnificently staged at the National Centre for the Performing Arts.



Shanghai Conservatory of Music Symphony Orchestra Performs Symphonic Concert
Version of Kangding Love Songs

Source:<https://export.shobserver.com/baijiahao/html/810390.html>



The opera Kangding Love Song by the Shanghai Conservatory of Music.
Source: <https://www.shcmusic.edu.cn/2023/1014/c2126a49050/page.htm>



The city of Kangding, Sichuan, China.
Source: <https://sc.cri.cn/20230524/a4cc7bae-d4fe-7a05-e1cc-9b77da5e3340.html>



Jianfen Gu. Source: https://yule.sohu.com/a/763895952_121489962

Jianfen Gu is a Chinese composer. She is best known for writing "The Kiss from Mother", "Young Friends Come Together," and "The Affection of Green Leaves to the Roots". Gu was born in Osaka, Japan, in 1935, but her family was originally from Weihai, China. She and her family moved back to China and settled in Dalian in 1942. She studied at the Luda Art Troupe, Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts, and the Shenyang Conservatory of Music. She graduated from the latter in 1955. From 1984 to 1989, she ran the Gu Jianfen Vocal Training Center, where she trained singers like Mao Amin, Na Ying, and Sun Nan. She was a council member for several organizations, such as the China International Culture Exchange Center, China Council for the Promotion of Peaceful National Reunification, and Beijing Municipal Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. She also served as the vice president of the Chinese Musicians' Association in 1999.

This is an art song full of longing for the homeland and praise for the motherland, tinged with a light sorrow. During her childhood, the songwriter returned from Japan to China. When she stepped onto Chinese soil, her young heart knew this was her true motherland, her true home. Many years later, this life experience still lingered deeply within her heart. Drawing on her personal story, she composed the song **Remember Me** in 1982 to express the overseas wanderer's longing for the motherland. In 1983, when Jianfen Gu met Fengbo Zhu for the first time in Shanghai, she played the song for her. Upon hearing it, Fengbo Zhu was moved to tears. She felt the song expressed the unwavering and selfless love of a wronged child for the motherland—a great love—so she decided to sing it. At the concert featuring Jianfen Gu's works on February 22, 2001, Fengbo Zhu recalled that when recording this song, all the orchestra members present were deeply moved, and the conductor cried upon leaving the studio. They felt the song truly voiced their inner emotions.

In June 2019, the song was selected as one of the "100 Outstanding Songs Celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China."

This song is structured in a ternary form with a reprise. The first section is repeated, played in a slow, free, and lyrical style with a recitative quality, presenting a calm mood.

The prelude of Remember Me blends major tonality with harmonic minor elements, as if drawing the listener into a foreign land, subtly hinting at the composer's life abroad.

The musical theme combines syllabic and melismatic settings, producing beautiful, flowing phrases. Both lyrics and music express a quiet, warm mood.

The image displays a musical score for 'The Swan' by Camille Saint-Saëns, specifically the section for the piano and solo. The score is written in G major and 4/4 time. It begins with a piano introduction marked 'piano' and a tempo of 'Andante'. The main melody is marked 'solo' and 'pp' (pianissimo). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings like 'mp' (mezzo-piano), 'mf' (mezzo-forte), and 'p' (piano). The piece concludes with a final cadence marked 'piano'.

The second section expands the range to e (higher octave), opening with a perfect octave from d (lower) to d (higher), a broad interval that conveys the musical climax. This interval evolves from the perfect fifth in the first section, shifting the tonal center from the dominant to the tonic and pushing all emotions to the peak.

34 *accel.* *a little faster* (♩ = 66—72) *f*

39 *3* *3*

44 *ff* *p* *accel.* *mp* *mf*

48 *f* *ff* *fast* (♩ = 86—92) *ad lib. piano*

The second section's melody is derived from and developed from the first. Its main characteristic is preserving much of the first section's key melodic and rhythmic elements, then varying and developing them based on the original theme.

The third section reprises the first, and this return after the contrasting second section plays a critical role in establishing the song's central musical image and unifying the entire piece.

The musical score consists of five staves of music in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff (measures 53-55) features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns. The second staff (measures 56-59) begins with a measure marked '8th' and an '8th' interval line, followed by a 'solo' section marked 'a tempo (♩ = 56—62), with deep longing' and 'pp'. The third staff (measures 60-63) includes a triplet of eighth notes marked '3'. The fourth staff (measures 64-67) shows dynamics of 'mp', 'mf', and 'mp'. The fifth staff (measures 68-70) begins with a 'p' dynamic and ends with a double bar line.

Throughout the song, a recurring musical motif appears several times: twice transposed up an octave in the second section and again in the third, giving the entire melody a sense of unity and continuity.

Though the developmental techniques vary, the piece maintains strong cohesion.

In short, the composer uses melody to accurately and vividly express the emotions embedded in the lyrics. The chosen musical tones precisely reflect the inner feelings of the lyrics. The song authentically portrays the homesickness of overseas wanderers, blending their bittersweet experiences into a beautiful melody, generating immense emotional resonance and power.

Lyric:

I miss the small river in my hometown,
And the squeaking water mill by the river,
Oh! Mama (Mother),
If there's a wave smiling at you, that's me. that's me. that's me.
I miss the smoke from my hometown,
And the cattle carts on the lane to the market,
Oh! Mama (Mother),
If there is a bamboo flute playing to you, that's me. that's me. that's me.
I long for the fishing fires of my hometown,
And the beautiful conch on the beach,
Oh! Mama (Mother),
If there's a sail coming to you, that's me. that's me. that's me.
I miss the moon in my hometown,
And the reflection of the green hills in the water,
Oh! Mama (Mother),
If you hear a mountain song from afar, that's me. that's me. that's me.



Liping Wang. Source: <http://www.counsellor.gov.cn/2020new/character.htm?page=wlp>

Liping Wang, male, Manchu ethnicity, was born in August 1941 in Changchun, Jilin Province, with his ancestral home also in Changchun, Jilin. He holds a bachelor's degree and is a First-Class Composer. He is a recipient of Chinese government special allowances, a composer and lyricist, Lifetime Honorary Chairman of the Music Copyright Society of China, Honorary President of the China Film Music Society, former Vice Chairman of the Central Committee of the China Association for Promoting Democracy, and former Vice Chairman of the Chinese Musicians Association.

In November 1954, Liping Wang was admitted to the Junior Class of the Central Conservatory of Music. In 1960, he entered the university-level program and was accepted into the Composition Department of the Central Conservatory of Music. In 1973, he was assigned to the Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio, where he began his professional composing career. In 1991, Liping Wang led the creation of China's first collective copyright management organization, the Music Copyright Society of China. On December 17, 1992, the Music Copyright Society of China was officially established, with Liping Wang serving as Chairman. On December 29, 2017, at the *Glorious Moment—Symphonic Concert of Liping Wang's Works* held in Harbin, he performed and sang "**Great Ocean, My Sweet Home**". In 2021, his work *A Century of Music: A Chronological Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Chinese Songs* was published and won Second Prize in the Shanghai Book Awards.

"**Great Ocean, My Sweet Home**" is the theme song of the documentary *The Sea Is Calling*. The melody and rhythm are developed from the first two measures of the first musical phrase, with a consistent basic rhythmic pattern that unifies the entire piece. The melody mainly uses sequences and repetitions as developmental techniques. The endings of the first, second, and third sections have similar tonal resolutions, creating unity; the fourth section ends on the dominant tone, giving the song a unique and lingering flavor. The piece is structured in four sections: the first emphasizes narration; the second and third intensify the emotional expression; the fourth returns to calmness, echoing the first. The melody remains mostly in the mid-range, making the emotion subtle and delicate, and leaving room for reflection.¹⁰

¹⁰ Sui, Xin. *The Artistic Value and Educational Significance of the Song "Great Ocean, My Sweet Home" as Movie Music*. Northern Music, 2018.

The "Great Ocean, My Sweet Home" melody is smooth and flowing, approachable and warm, yet structurally rigorous. The song is in F major and uses 3/4 time, consisting of six musical phrases grouped into three sections of two phrases each, forming a standard simple ternary form.

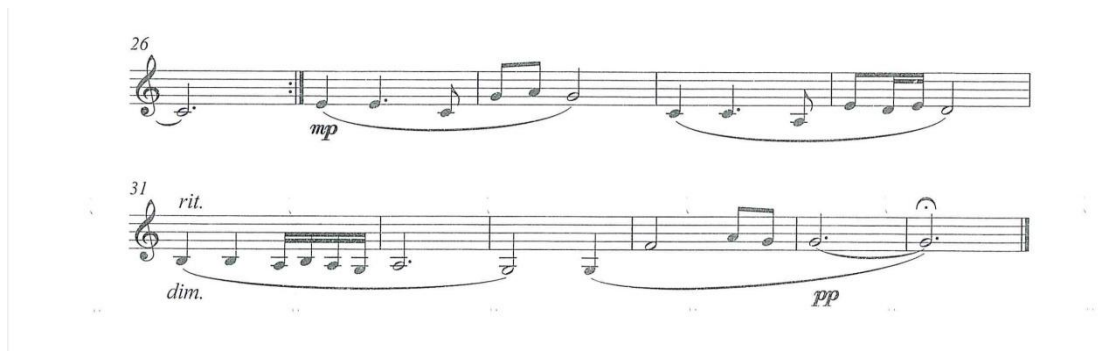
- **Section One:** Comprising two phrases over eight measures, the phrases follow a dominant–tonic harmonic relationship. The melodic line is gentle, mainly moving in seconds or thirds. Syncopated and dotted rhythms repeat frequently. Wide melodic leaps resemble sea waves, while repeated notes enhance the lyrical quality of the music. This section is like a casual, heartfelt conversation—simple and deeply emotional.



- **Section Two:** Also, in the eight measures, the pitch range rises noticeably, starting with a leap of a fifth from the dominant note. The style shifts from narrative to emotional expression, and the mood becomes more intense. This section is repeated, emphasizing the emotional attachment to the sea.



- **Section Three:** The final section, with ten measures, brings new variation. The melody becomes more dynamic, the tempo slows, and the volume fades. Ending on the dominant note, this section leaves the listener with open-ended imagination, as if calling out to one's hometown and motherland.



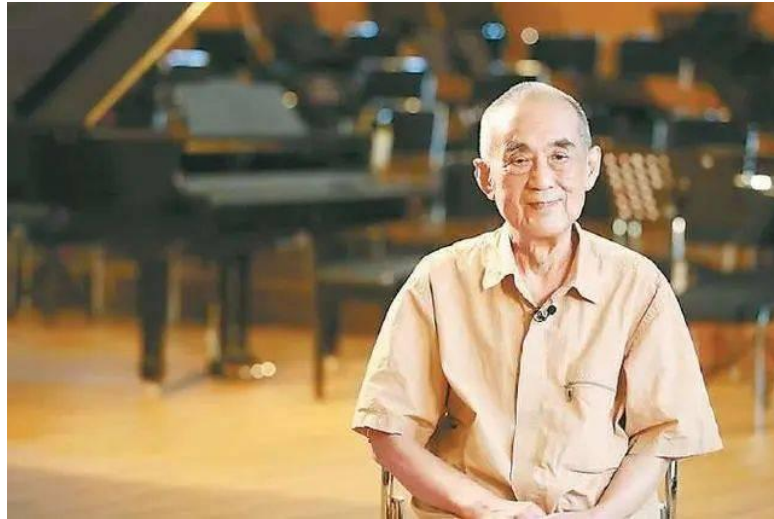
"Great Ocean, My Sweet Home" is musically accessible, melodious, and sincerely emotional. Its melody is simple and graceful, easy to sing. Rhythmic techniques such as half notes, dotted half notes, and double-dotted rhythms fully express the protagonist's deep longing for the sea, hometown, and motherland. Each section's lyrics escalate, moving from gentle storytelling to emotional release, showcasing the protagonist's deep love for the sea and hope for the motherland's prosperity.

"Great Ocean, My Sweet Home" has been included in several official textbooks, such as the fourth-grade music textbook by the People's Education Press and the eighth-grade textbook by the People's Music Publishing House.

In December 2013, Taiwan's elementary school *Arts and Humanities* textbook also included **"Great Ocean, My Sweet Home"**.

Lyrics (approximate meaning):

When I was little, my mother told me
The sea is my hometown.
Born by the sea, grew up in the sea
Oh sea, oh sea
It's where I live
Sea breeze blows, waves surge.
With me wandering far and wide
Oh sea, oh sea
Just like my mother to me
Wherever I go across the world
You're always by my side.
When I was little, my mother told me
The sea is my hometown.
Born by the sea, grew up in the sea
Oh sea, oh sea
It's where I live
Sea breeze blows, waves surge
With me wandering far and wide
Oh sea, oh sea
Just like my mother to me
Wherever I go across the world
You're always by my side
Oh sea, oh sea
Just like mother to me
Wherever I go across the world
You're always by my side
Oh sea, my hometown
Oh sea, my hometown
My hometown
My hometown



Shiguang Wang Source: https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_22911585

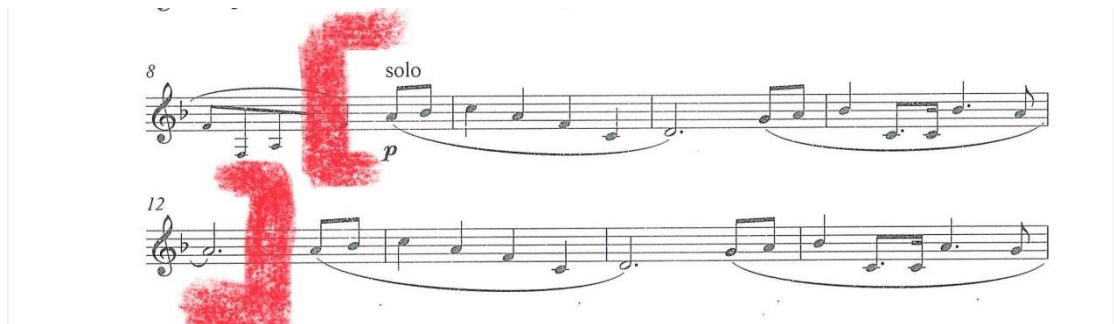
Shiguang Wang (1941 – 2023), male, was a native of Qingdao, Shandong, with ancestral roots in Licheng, Shandong. In 1963, he graduated from the Composition Department of the Central Conservatory of Music, studying under **Zhongrong Luo**. In 1976, he was appointed resident composer at the China National Opera House. He once served as Vice Chairman of the China Musicians Association. Shiguang Wang began composing songs and winning awards in his youth. He later majored in composition at the Central Conservatory of Music and served as the director of the China National Opera House for 13 years. He was also an advisor for the 8th Council of the China Musicians Association.

"Song of Yangtze River" was composed by Shiguang Wang in 1984 as the theme song for the TV documentary *"Tales of the Yangtze"*. While showcasing the grandeur, turbulence, and vastness of the Yangtze River, the song also employs personification to artistically encapsulate the beauty of China's landscapes and the spirit of its people through the lens of the river. The song is a lyrical piece structured in ternary (ABA) form. In June 2019, the song was selected as one of the "100 Outstanding Songs in Celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China."¹¹

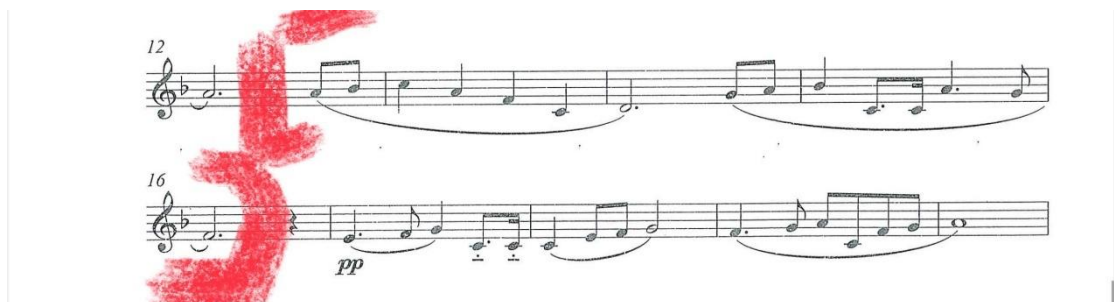
¹¹ Cai, Nan. *The Story Behind "Song of Yangtze River"*. Northern Music, 2006.

Musically, “*Song of Yangtze River*” adopts a ternary (ABA) structure.

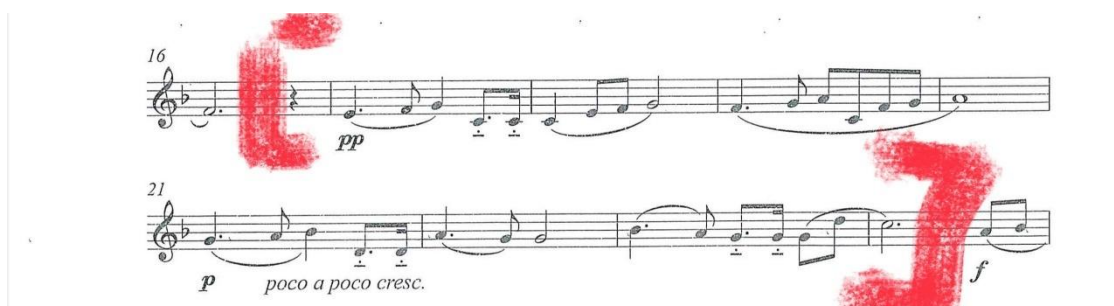
The first section A begins on an upbeat to introduce the main theme. The leading phrases depict the wide river and its smooth flow.



Phrases three and four are modified repetitions of the first two, reinforcing the main motif. The bright melody and steady rhythm evoke the image of flowing river water.



The B section sharply contrasts with section A. Its melody develops in stepwise motion instead of thematic variation. The rhythm gradually tightens, presenting a broad and stirring musical image that builds to a climax, conveying the sense of a great river in motion.



The third section returns to section A, restating the main theme.

21 *p* poco a poco cresc. *f*

25

29 piano

This musical score consists of three staves. The first staff (measures 21-24) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a 'poco a poco cresc.' (poco a poco crescendo) instruction. It features a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, ending with a red bracket. The second staff (measures 25-28) continues the melodic line with a red bracket. The third staff (measures 29-32) begins with a 'piano' dynamic and a red bracket.

The ending reiterates the musical motif twice completely and once as a transposed expansion, deepening the listener's impression of the musical theme.

64 *rit.* more slowly and majestically *rit.* *ff*

This musical score consists of a single staff (measures 64-67). It begins with a 'rit.' (ritardando) instruction and the text 'more slowly and majestically'. The melodic line is composed of quarter and half notes. The staff ends with a 'rit.' instruction and a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic.

lyrics

You have come from the snowy mountains,
The spring tide is your bounty,
You are running toward the East Sea,
The waves are your strength.
With sweet milk, you nurture the sons and daughters of all races,
You use your beautiful arms to hold up the mountains and the sea.
We praise the Yangtze River,
You are an infinite source of water;
We are attached to the Yangtze River,
You have the strength of a mother.
You have come from the past,
The giant wave washes away the dust,
You run toward the future,
The sound of the waves echoes beyond the sky.
You irrigate the land of flowers with pure streams,
You fill the land with flowers,
With majestic power, you drive a new era.
We praise the Yangtze River,
You are the source of infinity;
We are attached to the Yangtze River,
You have a mother's heart.
Ah, Yangtze River. Ah, Yangtze River.

The **Yangtze** River is the longest river in Eurasia and the third-longest in the world. It rises at Jari Hill in the Tanggula Mountains of the Tibetan Plateau and flows 6,300 km in a generally easterly direction to the East China Sea. It is the fifth-largest primary river by discharge volume in the world. Its drainage basin comprises one-fifth of the land area of China, and is home to nearly one-third of the country's population.

The Yangtze has played a major role in the history, culture, and economy of China. For thousands of years, the river has been used for water, irrigation, sanitation, transportation, industry, boundary-marking, and war. The Yangtze Delta generates as much as 20% of China's GDP, and the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze is the largest hydroelectric power station in the world.



Sanxia, The Yangtze River.

Source: <https://www.ctg.com.cn/sxjt/sxgc4/gcgk7/index.html>



Chongqing City, The Yangtze River.

Source:

<http://www.cq.xinhuanet.com/20240424/4d4f4b1bfd7f45d89750ed805fd382db/c.html>

Conclusion.

When performing Western and Chinese works on the French horn, the performer needs to make different adjustments and adaptations in terms of style, tone color, technical approach, and emotional expression.

First of all, in European works, the French horn often assumes a grand and heroic role. Its tone is required to be rich, full, and possess good penetration and resonance. In Romantic and later works, the French horn is often used to express natural scenery, epic atmospheres, or deep emotions, so the performer needs to have a high level of intonation control and sensitivity in handling dynamics. At the same time, the rhythm and structure of Western works are usually more rigorous. Performers must strictly follow the time signature, emphasizing the stability of the beat and the symmetry of musical phrases. In addition, the French horn in Western orchestras frequently collaborates with strings, woodwinds, or other brass instruments, requiring performers to have a strong sense of ensemble and the ability to blend tone colors.

In contrast, in Chinese works, the role of the French horn focuses more on the expression of “charm” and the creation of artistic conception. Chinese music emphasizes moving people with emotion, with melodies often based on the pentatonic scale, rich in national characteristics and vocal quality. When performing such works, the French horn needs to appropriately soften its tone, pursuing a clear, ethereal, and gentle texture, and even imitate the expressive techniques of traditional Chinese instruments. In terms of rhythmic treatment, Chinese works often adopt free rhythms or ambiguous beats, highlighting the sense of breath and linguistic quality of musical phrases. This requires the performer to have strong musical sensitivity and rhythmic flexibility. Moreover, Chinese works have unique aesthetic preferences in phrase endings, glissandi, and ornamentation, demanding the performer to adjust breath and technique delicately to accurately grasp the “implicit yet not overt” expressive style.

In summary, when performing these two stylistically distinct musical genres on the French horn, one must both respect the core of their styles and possess a certain level of expressiveness and musical understanding. Western works emphasize the expression of structure, power, and regulation, whereas Chinese works focus more on conveying artistic conception, emotion, and national style. Only by fully understanding the cultural background and stylistic characteristics can the expressive power of the French horn be brought into full play.

Chinese history spans over five thousand years. In comparison to this long and tumultuous history, the search for a new voice in Chinese music, roughly 100 years, is only 1/50 of China's extensive timeline. In these short 100 years, however, China has become a horn nation, though not yet a strong one, but a large one. It would be fascinating to hear the horn sound that Chinese composers and performers have developed after another 100 years.

As a horn player, I hope that through this dissertation, the Polish people can gain a better understanding of Chinese 20th-century music and contribute to the cultural exchange between the two countries. China and Poland are both great nations in the world, especially in terms of culture. China has a long history and profound cultural heritage, while Poland has Chopin, a world-renowned composer and pianist. In recent years, more and more Chinese students have come to Poland to study music, and among the contestants of the 2025 International Chopin Piano Competition, Chinese pianists make up the largest group. I believe that in the future, China and Poland can collaborate and develop even better in the field of music. I also plan to invite ad. dr hab. Tomasz Bińkowski to conduct masterclasses in China and promote the development of the French horn in China. Long live the friendship between China and Poland!

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23. 教我如何不想他

刘半农词

赵元任曲

1926年

Moderato

(小提琴)

p

rit.

a tempo

天 上 飘 着

些 微 云, 地 上 吹 着 些 微

风, 啊 微 风 吹 动 了 我 头

16

发, 教我如何不想他?

rit.

rit.

22

月光恋爱着海洋, 海

a tempo

a tempo

27

洋恋爱着月光。啊

cresc.

cresc.

32

这般蜜也似的银夜，教我如何不想他？

mp

37

rit. *a tempo* *pp*

rit. *pp a tempo*

43

水面落花慢慢流，

p

48

mf

水 底 鱼 儿 慢 慢 游。 啊

mf

53

燕 子， 你 说 些 什 么 话？ 教 我 如 何 不 想

58

他？ 枯

rit. *a tempo*

rit. *a tempo*

63

树 在 冷 风 里 摇， 野 火 在 暮 色 中 烧。 啊

67

西 天 还 有 些 儿 残 霞， 教 我 如 何 不 想

72

他?