A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRADITIONAL PEKING OPERA AND CONTEMPORARY WESTERN PERCUSSION MUSIC IN MU KUEI-YIN IN PERCUSSION BY CHIEN-HUI HUNG

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ABSTRACT

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The art of traditional music has diminished in significance in educational and cultural institutions in Taiwan and has been gradually replaced by Western music in schools and concerts. Some artists in Taiwan have observed the potential impact of the loss of this vibrant art form and have tried new ways to regain the public’s attention. Taiwanese composer Chien-Hui Hung and the Ju Percussion Group have done numerous cross-cultural productions incorporating traditional arts with Western concert music as an effort to preserve and regain attention for Taiwanese culture. The aim of this study is to examine one of these endeavors to combine traditional arts and modern Western percussion music in Chien-Hui Hung’s *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*. This doctoral document is the first to discuss Chien-Hui Hung’s music and her working relationship with Ju Percussion Group.

Chapter One of this document consists of the author’s interview with the composer discussing her musical background, education, relationship with Ju Percussion Group, and her view of the current development of music in Taiwan – both Western and traditional. Chapter Two is a brief introduction to Peking Opera. Chapter Three is a study of the traditional Peking Opera play, *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*, from which the composer draw inspirations for her work *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*. Chapter Four is an analysis of *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*, both individually and in relation to *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*. 
To my beloved parents and husband
for their endless love, support, and patience.
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Traditional Chinese percussion instruments play an essential role in the music for Peking Opera. The art of the Peking Opera and its music, however, has diminished in significance in educational and cultural institutions in Taiwan and has been gradually replaced by Western music in schools and concerts. Some artists in Taiwan have observed the potential impact of the loss of this vibrant art form, and have tried new ways to regain the public’s attention. Composer Chien-Hui Hung and her collaboration with the Ju Percussion Group is one example. Her composition, Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion, is a 17-minute work for percussion ensemble that draws its inspiration from the traditional Peking Opera Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command. This writing contains a short biography of the composer, an interview with the composer conducted by the author, a thorough study of the piece in its cultural context, both historically and in the present day, along with theoretical and musical analyses.

The intent of this study is to examine Chien-Hui Hung’s Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion and the Peking Opera play Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command separately and in relationship to one another.
INTRODUCTION

Chien-Hui Hung, a Taiwanese female composer, is the composer in residence with Ju Percussion Group and teaches at Shih Chien University and the Taipei National University of the Arts. She attended the National Institute of the Arts (NIA) where she studied composition with Shui-Long Ma and Yen Lu, as well as percussion with Tzong-Ching Ju. Upon graduating from NIA in 1987, she continued her compositional study in France at the Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris, the Conservatoire National de Boulogne, and the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris, where she received the Diplôme Supérieur of Composition in 1995. During this time her primary teachers were Yoshihisa Taira, Alain Bancquart, Michel Zbar, Paul Méfano, and Laurent Cuniot. After seven years of study in France, Hung returned to Taiwan and began her career as composer in residence with Ju Percussion Group.2

Although educated primarily in France, Miss Hung’s compositional style reflects a strong influence from her Asian heritage, often seeking historical and fictional female characters that inspire her and incorporating their stories into her music. Her association with the Ju Percussion Group is the longest standing of any composers in Taiwan. This working relationship has fostered significant experimentation in the area of cross-cultural productions. Most reputable of these projects is the 2001 composition *Les Douze Lunes Du Serpent*, a collaboration with the French composer Francois Bernard Mache that was commissioned by Les Percussions de Strasbourg and premiered at Les 38e Rugissants in Grenoble, France. Other noteworthy works from her catalog of cross-cultural productions include *Mulan* in 2010 and *Mu Kuei-Yin In*

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1 Now the National University of the Arts.

Percussion in 2009, both with the Guo Guang Opera Company. Although both Mulan and Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion incorporate Peking Opera influences, they differ greatly from one another. Specifically, Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion places greater emphasis on the music of Peking Opera while Mulan favors the theatrical elements. While doing research on the character of Mu Kuei-Yin in preparation for her work Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion, Hung engaged in discussions with actors from the Guo Guang Opera Company. These discussions resulted in a mutual agreement that the music of the traditional Peking Opera play Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command was the most suitable of the plays based on the character of Mu Kuei-Yin for adaptation into a new work. Miss Hung ultimately drew inspiration from Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command and adapted elements of the traditional music associated with it into her composition Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion. Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion was premiered in 2009 and has since enjoyed critical and public acclaim in performances worldwide by the Ju Percussion Group³.

Percussionist Tzong-Ching Ju founded the Ju Percussion Group (JPG) in January 1986 in Taiwan. It is the first percussion ensemble established in Taiwan and is comprised of twelve percussionists and one composer in residence. The members possess great virtuosity in the playing of Western percussion instruments as well as Chinese gong and drum music and other forms of Asian traditional music. JPG maintains a commitment to the promotion of music performance, education, and the advancement of percussion in Taiwan and beyond. Under the direction of Mr. Ju, JPG has become world renowned for its innovative blend of East and West, traditional and contemporary. JPG has pioneered the development of the percussive arts in

³于國華, 朱宗慶打擊樂團“敲星擊月—擊樂星星的成長紀事”（台北市：明天國際圖書有限公司, 2005年），第67-75頁。

Taiwan through its more than one hundred domestic and international concerts annually. Since its establishment, they have performed in Asia, Europe, Australia, and America. JPG has also been invited to play in numerous major international festivals such as the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) in America, the Budapest Spring Festival in Hungary, the Les 38e Rugissants in France, the Chekhov International Theatre Festival in Russia, and the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing. The ensemble has performed and toured nationally (and internationally) with Cloud Gate Dance Theater and Lanling Theater Workshop, and in 1992, undertook a series of experiments in musical theater that resulted in three major multi-media productions: Fantasia in 1993, Dream of Chimes in 1994, and See the Music in 2001.

An active participant in the cultivation of new works for percussion, the Ju Percussion Group regularly commissions and premiers new works for percussion from some of the finest composers in the field of percussion composition. To date, they have amassed more than one hundred and twenty commissioned works. These compositions, in combination with JPG’s commitment to the performance of arrangements of traditional Chinese and Taiwanese folk tunes and children’s songs, have resulted in sixteen critically acclaimed, award-winning recordings. Recordings from their catalog have been awarded the Golden Tripod Award and the Golden Melody Award (Taiwan’s equivalent of the Grammy Award)⁴.

CHAPTER I. THE INTERVIEW

The following interview was conducted by the author with Chien-Hui Hung in Taipei, Taiwan on November 25\textsuperscript{th}, 2011. Due to the very limited source regarding Miss Hung’s musical background and study on her compositional style, the author feels conducting this interview is the most effective way of acquiring first handed and detail information on her music and personal interests. During our ninety minutes together, we discussed multiple topics including her early musical education, the decision to pursue formal composition study in France, her return to Taiwan and relationship with Ju Percussion Group, and the recent experiments she has pursued with cross-cultural productions. A significant amount of time was dedicated to discussion of Miss Hung’s unique compositional style, the inspiration she draws from historical (and fictional) female characters, and her desire to integrate Asian and Western percussive elements into her compositions.

Miss Hung is a woman of great passion. This is evidenced in the way she speaks of her teachers, music, and culture. The following transcript will provide the reader with insight into the composer and her music, in her own words.

1.1: THE INTERVIEW

Isabelle Huang Streng (IHS): Can you talk about how you started with music and the route you took throughout music education in your life?
Chien-Hui Hung (CHH): I started with YAMAHA. Because when I was little, there wasn’t a music school at the elementary school level, it wasn’t very popular yet. I was doing pretty well at the YAMAHA schools so by the time I graduated from elementary school, my father considered sending me to audition for music schools. By that time, there were a few music schools in the northern and middle parts of Taiwan, especially in Taipei. I was born in Tainan but there wasn’t a music school there yet, so I went to Taipei to audition for music schools.

Why did I start taking music lessons? I guess it was because both of my parents love music, also my second oldest sister who graduated from the National Tainan Girls’ High School in music. She was also my first music teacher. I guess you can say it is fate. Anyway, so I went up to Taipei to audition and got into Kwang-Jen Junior High School. When I was at the YAMAHA schools, they taught me how to play the piano at the lessons. However, they sometimes also taught improvisation and basic music theory. I think that is why I was pretty good at music theory when I was at Kwang-Jen Junior High School. During those three years at the Kwang-Jen Junior High School, piano performance was my major and flute performance was my minor. The funny thing is that when I graduated from junior high and went to audition at the NIA, I auditioned as a composition major instead. Mainly because I felt like my piano performance was kind of poor and didn’t think I would have a chance if I auditioned as a piano major. Yeah, so since I felt like I was pretty good at composing and music theory, I made up a piece and sent it in for the application. Surprisingly, I got accepted to the NIA!

Technically speaking, I didn’t have any professional composition training up until my study at the NIA. The compositional skills I learned when I was at YAMAHA were more of an

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5 The then National Institutes of the Arts. It was converted to a university in 2004 and it’s now called Taipei National University of the Arts.
improvisational type and they had their own system of it, which was beneficial for me in some ways but it surely was very different from the traditional academic compositional skills and rules that I learned at the NIA. My first “real” composition teacher was Mr. Shuei-Long Ma. He was a great teacher but he was very busy. He was the one who taught me all the fundamental compositional skills, starting with Baroque style, fugue, etc. Another great thing about studying with Ma was that he was a very insightful teacher. During my first year of study at NIA, Ma told all of his students that those who major in composition should take percussion performance as his/her minor. Ma thinks percussion is and will be the most prominent and important instrument in 20th and 21st century music. His point was that the rest of the instruments had pretty much already reached their developmental high peak, however, percussion is just reaching the height of its attention and is blossoming now.

I also sat in at the orchestra rehearsals when I was at NIA. The conductor then was Professor Ming-Fu Liou. Professor Liou said to me: “Hey, there is a guy majoring in percussion performance who just returned to Taiwan this year from studying in Vienna, Austria. His name is Mr. Tsong-Ching Ju. Maybe you should take lessons from him.” So I called Mr. Ju right after he got back to Taiwan, to ask him if I could take lessons form him. I think that was even before Ju started teaching at schools. After a while, Ju was hired to teach at NIA so I started majoring in composition and double-minoring in piano performance and percussion performance. In my memory, I think you had to have a minor for the first four years in school6 back then, so I kept taking percussion lessons throughout those four years. Mr. Ju was also all about promoting percussion in Taiwan when he first got back from Vienna. Due to my specialty being

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6 NIA offered 5-year degree programs. The music program in NIA changed from a 5-year program to a 4-year program in 1999.
composition, Ju asked me to arrange a lot of Taiwanese folk songs for percussion ensemble. I got a lot of practical opportunities for my composition skills by working for his percussion group.\(^7\) Although percussion was my minor instrument back then, I was still considered a member of the Ju Percussion Group and performed with them on stage together at the beginning of the Ju Percussion Group. Obviously, I can’t do it anymore because I can hardly keep up with them now. Anyway, because Mr. Ju’s goal in the beginning was to get the group going and promoting percussion in Taiwan, I was so fortunate as to be a founding member of the Ju Percussion Group.

IHS: Whom did you study composition with before going to France to study?

CHH: When I was at NIA, I only studied with Mr. Ma. After I graduated from NIA, I auditioned for colleges because I wanted to continue studying. I got into Tong-Wu University and studied with Mr. Yen Lu. However, I was only at Tong-Wu for half a year before I got the scholarship from the Ministry of Education to go study in France. I then dropped out of the school and started to prepare to go to France.

IHS: So was it your own idea to go study in France?

CHH: Well, no. I guess you can say that it all came to me as a fate. It all started with my husband’s (then boyfriend’s) mother who saw an advertisement about the scholarships for studying in France sponsored by the Ministry of Education in a newspaper. Our relationship with France was on very good terms for those few years, so there were a lot of scholarships for studying in France offered by both the Ministry of Education and France. The one I got was offered by the Ministry of Education. The spots for the scholarship were limited, perhaps only 7

\(^7\) JPG.
or 8 spots per year if I remember it correctly. It was also assigned to different categories every year, like stings, winds, keyboards, etc. The year I applied had spots for composition majors and I was fortunate to get it. That’s why I dropped out of the school and started to get ready to go to France.

IHS: So was it a trend to go study abroad back then or was it a very rare thing?

CHH: A trend? Well, for me it was more because the degree from NIA wasn’t too useful. It was more like a degree between high school and college and most of the places and people did not look at it very highly. That’s why I auditioned for college after I graduated from NIA and was thinking about studying abroad as well. If I were to go study in the United States, the degree from NIA would not have been recognized very highly either. Most of the people who graduated from NIA and went to study in the States had to start as a sophomore in college. However, the degree-recognized system in Europe was much similar to that of NIA’s. In France they have conservatories, which are similar to NIA. The application process for French schools is more merit based than degree or resume based. Another interesting factor of the French music education system is that age also plays an important part in the audition process. They have pretty strict rules/requirement on age for each instrument. For example, the age for a violin audition is from 13- or 14-year-old to 21-year-old. They will deny your application and audition spot if you are older than 21. Each instrument has its own age requirement and from what I remembered, piano and violin had the youngest age limit as 21-year-old. They think you’re basically hopeless and there isn’t much room for you to improve in your playing if you’re a pianist or a violinist and older than 21. Actually, they rarely take the 21-year-olds. Usually they would prefer to take someone who is 18 or 19 years old, in that range. Because they think the younger musicians/students have a better chance to develop and blossom than the older ones.
IHS: Did the French schools come to Taiwan to recruit?

CHH: No, no, no… I went there by myself. I applied for and got awarded the scholarship to study in France first. The scholarship had nothing to do with which school you wish to attend. My scholarship was from the Ministry of Education and was for four years. After being awarded the scholarship, it is your responsibility to apply for and audition for the schools you wish to attend. What I was trying to explain earlier is there were lots of students from NIA who applied for this scholarship. A degree from NIA wasn’t recognized very highly in the United States. Students who graduated from NIA and went to the States afterward always had a hard time because they had to take a lot of academic courses, because NIA did not offer those courses. Students who went to Europe after graduating from NIA usually had an easier time because the European music education system is not based on academic courses and the number of credit hours. You need to audition first and if you get in, you start the whole thing fresh from the beginning just like everybody else. After you got the scholarship, you had to get accepted into a school in order to use that scholarship. Students who graduated from NIA and went to the U. S. to study usually struggled a lot and had a hard time because most U. S. schools didn’t accept the credit hours and courses showing on their transcripts. Therefore, those students had to retake all the courses, not just music course, including general courses like English, Math, etc. Well, this is what I’ve heard from the students a few classes ahead of me. Anyway, I think I got off the topic a little bit. Let me try to get back on it.

So I went to France to study. The first year I was pretty much just preparing for the audition for the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique de Paris, because it is very hard to get in. One of the reasons was because the areas they test you on in the admission exam are quite different than the ones we were taught in NIA. The other was because my French still wasn’t
good at all. Therefore I was going to a Catholic School to take some music courses, mostly music theory and mainly taking French courses during my first year in France. After that, I went to Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris during my second year in France. Well, because I didn’t get into the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique de Paris, hahaha! Basically, I think Ecole Normale de Musique is just like the Normal Universities in Taiwan. When I first started at Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris, my composition teacher was Merlet, oops, I forgot his last name… (so terrible, so terrible…), I’m sorry! Anyways, he’s a very French gentleman. He also looked so much like Ravel! I never paid attention to what Ravel looked like when I was studying in Taiwan, but then my classmates in France kept telling me that Merlet looked so much like Ravel. So I went to check out what Ravel looked like and I was stunned! Anyway, I’m off the topic again. But I think Merlet also thought he was Ravel because he dressed and talked like him too!! Well, so back to the topic, Merlet’s compositional style was more conservative.

At this point, Ming-Hui Kuo8 interrupted to double-check the meaning of CHH’s statement: “So was this all in the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique de Paris?”

CHH: No, no! This was just in Ecole Normale de Musique. I told you I didn’t get into the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique the first year, well, the second year either. Let me try to make it clearer. The first year I was in France, I didn’t go to any music schools, conservatories, etc. I just went to a Catholic school to take French classes and basic music theory classes. Because honestly, it’s not the real music theory part I needed to learn, it was the ‘language’ of the music theory in French I needed to learn. I don’t know if you ran into the same language problem in English when you first went to the U. S. to study. I was basically taking

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8 Ming-Hui Kuo is a doctoral student at the University of Kentucky studying with James Campell. She was working on a lecture recital focusing on Miss Hung's composition during this time. The author agreed to let her listen in on our interview for her preparation of the recital.
those classes just so I could learn all the terms in French, so I could understand my composition teacher and be able to communicate in a way they could understand better in the future.

After studying with Merlet for a year, I realized I wasn’t very fond of his compositional style, so in my second year at the Ecole Normale de Musique, I switched to another class to study with Taira Yoshihisa. I was in that class for three years until I received the graduation certificate.

IHS: Were you in class with other students?

CHH: Yes, I was in the composition class, or you can say the composition department’s class, with other composition students.

IHS: So there weren’t any private lessons?

CHH: No, no, no. Our teacher Taira likes to teach master classes or group classes better than one-to-one lessons. Taira usually came to school on Friday afternoon and whoever had a piece for him to look at would bring it to the class. He would look at your piece, ask some questions and make some comments and suggestions. This way we got to look at other students’ pieces and got to know Taira’s opinion on different pieces in the class as well.

After I graduated from Ecole Normale de Musique, I wanted to apply to the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique de Paris. One of their exams is new music, well, electronic music I mean. I wasn’t very good at electro-acoustic music at the time so after I graduated from Ecole Normale de Musique, I went to the Conservatoire National de Boulogne instead for a year to study electronic music. The electronic music, for the first semester, focused on the use of tape and editing techniques. It wasn’t until the second semester at Conservatoire
National de Boulogne that I learned about computer electronic music. After honing my knowledge and skills on electronic music for a year, I finally applied to the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique de Paris again and this time, I got in. This was my fifth year in France. I went to the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique de Paris for three years then came back to Taiwan after my eighth year studying abroad.

My teacher in the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique de Paris was Alain Bon…qu?? Oops, I don’t remember how to spell his last name… (It is Alain Bancquet.)

Ming-Hui: Will I find it if I Google him?

CHH: I’m not sure, probably not? You know what? It’s ok. I’ll look it up when I get home and get back to you on that. I know I have it on my resume, the English version. Or if you can find my resume in English on the Internet, the one on the Ju Percussion Group’s website should have it. Right, then… where were we? I forgot. Oh yeah, so studying with Alain, his expertise is on micro-intervals, quarter-tones, etc. that kind of music. Therefore, the whole time I was studying with him that was my/our focus. However, his micro-interval music is more serialism-like. I think that’s how you say it in English. We call it *seriele* in French. It’s like the 12-tone series but he uses a 24-tone series because of the quarter-tones and he uses rhythms in his serialism compositional methods too, not just pitches. So in a way it’s very mathematically oriented, because the whole method is about lining up pitches, rhythms, timbers, intonations, articulations, dynamics, etc. Very serialist, as you can tell. The good thing is that our teacher Alain, even though his compositional style is solely serialism, he wasn’t asking us to be as strict or as limited

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9 Alain Bancquet was born in 1934 in Dieppe, France.

to one style like he is. He is actually very open-minded toward his students’ styles. Anyway, after a while, Alain also encouraged me to emphasize my Asian ethnicity, since I’m from Taiwan. He suggested I should go find some unique musical languages that belong to or represent my background and my culture. I then started to look for the sound of my ethnicity. I noticed that there is a kind of music in Tibet that interested me a lot—Lamas’ chanting or any chanting in the temples. These kinds of chanting sound a lot similar to the quarter-tone music although it’s technique and form are not the same as quarter-tone serialism music. Lamas’ chanting starts with a solo chanting by a leader and the rest of lamas follow him freely whenever they wish. So it is not unison and it certainly is not monophonic, but also not an exact quarter-tone music either. It is just that the slightly different pitches or intonations between all the lamas sound very much like quarter-tones and it creates a spectral music effect. I found it very interesting, so I told Alain about the Lama chanting music and he seemed very interested in it. Actually, my graduation assignment he gave me was to incorporate the Lama chanting music or technique into my piece. It was a piece incorporating the Lama chanting with electronic music. The electronic part was created from the Lama chanting that I had pre-recorded, edited, then replayed as the orchestra plays. It’s a piece with electronic music and orchestra. The name of that piece was *Chanting Temple*. At the same time I graduated, Mr. Ju expressed his wish for me to come back to Taiwan and to continue working with the Ju Percussion Group. I then came back and became the composer in residence at Ju Percussion Group. That is the end of story!

IHS: What if Mr. Ju had not expressed his wish for you to come back to work with the Ju Percussion Group when you graduated? Would you have wanted to continue your stay?

CNN: Did you mean staying in France?
IHS: Yes.

CHH: No. Not really.

IHS: So you have always wanted to and planned to come back to Taiwan after your study?

CHH: Actually, Mr. Ju had been telling me he wanted me to come back for years by then. The reason I did not come back earlier was because I had been studying all that time. By the time I graduated from the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique de Paris I had been in France for eight years. So Mr. Ju thought maybe it was about time to come back and so did I. Also, during those eight years I still came back every year, like every summer for example, to work with the Ju Percussion Group. My role in the Ju Percussion Group then was to write or to arrange some pieces for them to perform, to be involved in recording albums, as well as to occasionally play in the group and to tour with them. During this time, whenever they made an album about Taiwanese folk songs, traditional songs, and children’s songs, I always wrote and arranged some pieces for them to record. Therefore, my working relationship with the Ju Percussion Group had never ended or even had a gap while I was studying in France.

Actually, since I still had a lot of free time on my hands the first couple of years of my stay in France, I also studied with Gaston Sylvestre, the same teacher Shih-San Wu\(^\text{10}\) studied with. Shih-San Wu is the director of Ju Percussion Group and has been a member of the group since 1989. She is also the full-time assistant professor of percussion in TNUA. She received her B.M. and Ph.D. from the Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA) where she studied percussion with professor Tzong-Ching Ju, who is now the president of TNUA. Between her B.M. and Ph.D., Miss Wu went to France to study percussion and theatre music with professor Gaston Sylvestre and received the "Medaille d'Or a l'Unanimité", "Prix d'Excellence a l'Unanimité Felicitations", and "Prix de Virtuosite a l'Unanimité Felicitations" at the Conservatoire National de Region Ville de Rueil-Malmaison. Miss Wu is an active performer, as well as an educator. Her recitals are held in not only Taiwan, but also in France. Her area of expertise is theatre music in percussion. Wu Shih-San's Percussion Recital "NEOPERCUSME" was nominated for The 8th Taishin Arts Award in 2009.


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\(^{10}\) Miss Shih-San Wu is the director of Ju Percussion Group and has been a member of the group since 1989. She is also the full-time assistant professor of percussion in TNUA. She received her B.M. and Ph.D. from the Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA) where she studied percussion with professor Tzong-Ching Ju, who is now the president of TNUA. Between her B.M. and Ph.D., Miss Wu went to France to study percussion and theatre music with professor Gaston Sylvestre and received the "Medaille d'Or a l'Unanimité", "Prix d'Excellence a l'Unanimité Felicitations", and "Prix de Virtuosite a l'Unanimité Felicitations" at the Conservatoire National de Region Ville de Rueil-Malmaison. Miss Wu is an active performer, as well as an educator. Her recitals are held in not only Taiwan, but also in France. Her area of expertise is theatre music in percussion. Wu Shih-San's Percussion Recital "NEOPERCUSME" was nominated for The 8th Taishin Arts Award in 2009.
with for a year during my second year in France, which was my first year in Ecole Normale de Musique. The reason I stopped studying with Gaston after that year was because I got too busy and overwhelmed with the workload that I had to write. I then decided to focus on composing exclusively.

IHS: So when you graduated from the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique de Paris, if Mr. Ju had not asked you to come back and work with the group, did you ever think about having your own independent career instead of working with the Ju Percussion Group? Or was it kind of like fate for you that it happened at the right place and at the right time?

CHH: Well, yes, I think it was kind of like fate. I think it is because Mr. Ju has always been very nice to me, and he has always given me a lot of creative freedom. I can say that I am a unique example as a composer in Taiwan because of my fortune on my career path. I do not think there are many composers in Taiwan who can survive only by composing. Even in Europe or America I still think it is not easy to be a composer and focus only on composing, unless if you are the composer in resident with some ensembles or orchestras. However, even if you are a composer in residence with major orchestras in Europe or America, those are still not life-long. They are all contracted to a certain term. No one has what I have—composer in residence with a prestigious group, as long as I wish. Therefore, I do think I am very lucky to have had the opportunity to work with Mr. Ju and the Ju Percussion Group for such a long time. Mr. Ju is actually very open-minded and flexible about the music I want to write. Sometimes Mr. Ju would even give me some interesting and brainstorming ideas for the projects we were doing. For examples, we had a lot of cross-cultural productions in the past few years and those were all suggested and made possible by Mr. Ju. Even if I had those brilliant ideas on my own, it would still be impossible to put them all together by myself. Let’s take my two works related to Peking opera as examples—
the first one is *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion (2009)*, this was the first time I encountered working with Peking opera actors/actresses; the second one is *Mulan (2010)*, which was the first time I got to work with a director for Peking opera, not just the actors and actresses. These two cross-cultural productions have two different angles for combining western modern percussion ensemble music and traditional Peking opera and they would not have been possible if I wasn’t working with the Ju Percussion Group because those were both opportunities given to me by Mr. Ju.

IHS: Your works are mostly for percussion now. Did you write many pieces for other instruments and/or other types of music while you were in school? While you were in France?

CHH: Yes, actually the past few years, well, since I got back from France there were eight years that one of my job responsibilities was to work with the Ju Percussion Music School\(^{11}\). During that period of time, it seems like my main focus was on percussion because I had to write a lot of works for the Ju Percussion Music School, for educational purpose. However, ever since my role changed to Artistic Director of Ju Percussion Group about two years ago, my works have varied a lot more than before. I actually wrote two orchestra pieces this year. One of them was commissioned by the *Broadcasting Development Foundation*\(^{12}\) and the other was for a Chinese orchestra.

\(^{11}\) The Ju Percussion Music School is the educational system founded by Mr. Ju and the Ju Percussion Group Foundation in 2002.


\(^{12}\) The Broadcasting Development Foundation was a none-profit organization in Taiwan from 1985-2008.
The piece for the Chinese orchestra was just premiered last month, in October. I also had a NSO\textsuperscript{13} commission, well, not exactly NSO, I think it’s from The National Concert Hall and Theater Hall. They commissioned an orchestra piece from me. Therefore, it does seem like I have started to have more time on my own to accept and to write commission works other than just the ones for Ju Percussion Group, the Ju Percussion Schools, or just plain percussion works for other groups or performers. The fact is that I actually have plenty of commissions coming to me all the time. For example this year, I had a commission from a Japanese musician to write a piano quartet. I went to the premier for that piece back in September in Japan.

IHS: When you receive a commission for non-percussion works, are there a lot of restrictions or requests? Something like a wish list provided by the commissioner?

CHH: No, not really. Generally speaking, commissioned works just ask for the instrumentation and the size of the ensemble. For example, whether they ask for an orchestral piece or a string quartet piece, nothing else.

IHS: What about cross-cultural commissions? Did they have more restrictions or particular requests due to the involvement of two or more different fields?

CHH: Cross-cultural commissions are actually very rare. I think it is all because of my relationship with the Ju Percussion Group that I was fortunate enough to have the chance to work on cross-cultural commissions. I think cross-cultural commissions are very hard and not a common request for just any composer. Because you really have to be very specialized in the field—the other field, not music of course—in order to make it happen.

\textsuperscript{13} NSO stands for National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan.

IHS: Has all of this cross-cultural production experience had an influence on the style of your writing?

CHH: Yes, of course there are some changes in my writing after my cross-cultural experiences. Cross-cultural commissions are actually a lot different than the normal commissions. One of the very important things about cross-cultural productions is that you have to do a lot of study and research about the other culture you are crossing to combine with yours—western modern percussion ensemble. You need to learn what the characteristics and beauty about this other culture and then you have to make sure that by combining the two or more cultures together, you are not killing the beauty or the characteristics of the other culture, so you need to have a great understanding of that first. Also, you need to digest this process quite quickly, you can’t just let it marinade because then it will be too late and you will be running out of time. When I was working on my first work involving Peking Opera—*Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*, I spent a lot of time in meetings with the Peking Opera actor Yuan-Cheng Sun and actress Chia-Hou Liu. They gave me a lot of information and spent a lot of time answering my questions regarding all the details. It was then my job to digest all the things I had learned from them about Peking opera. Personally, I think crossing Peking Opera with percussion ensemble music is actually very hard. Because Peking Opera is a very complete, thorough system of ‘opera.’ It is not just about music and singing, it is also the movement, the gestures, the roles, the costumes, etc. It is a very old, traditional style of music and art and it is simply perfect. It has reached the absolute ultimate in its development. And I think it is very hard to add something more on top of perfection because it will easily seem unnecessary. The only way you can make it work is to either deconstruct it or to portray it in your own way. Since *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* was my first work related to and involving Peking Opera, I hoped to preserve its characteristics as much as I could. My approach
to *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* was to highlight the beauty of the traditional Peking Opera. In addition to that, the original percussion part in the traditional Peking Opera already has its own character, which makes combining Peking Opera and Western modern percussion music easier because of the common use of percussion instruments in the musical part. I would say that my approach for *Mu Keui-Yin In Percussion* is in a more conservative way. I tried to adapt and to preserve as many traditional and original elements from the Peking Opera as possible for that piece. Another reason I did it in a more conservative way was because the length of the piece was not very long. It was just not long enough for me to do anything that is surprisingly new. Also, the premier of *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* was programmed in a concert whose goal was to focus on and to highlight the vocal part of music, so that was why I adapted and focused mainly on the vocal and singing part in the traditional Peking opera when I first wrote the piece. However, after I adapted and incorporated the vocal and singing part of traditional Peking Opera into my writing, I felt it was a pity not to incorporate more elements from Peking Opera into my work. I decided this was my first time involving Peking Opera in my composition and I wanted more than just the singing part being presented on stage. I then started to incorporate the acting, the roles, the martial arts movements, the costumes, etc., into *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*. The second time I had the chance to do a Peking Opera cross-cultural production was *Mulan*. This time I deconstructed the Peking Opera part even more and the combination of the traditional Peking Opera and Western modern percussion ensemble music was better married than *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*. Part of it I think was because we had a director—Shiao-Ping for the theatrical part of the production. In the process of working with director Shiao-Ping, I discovered he not only is very knowledgeable about Peking Opera, he is also very musical and has a great sensitivity to music, to rhythms, and to theatrical tensions. He was excellent at grabbing the
essence of every element and his timing of putting everything together and placing everything in response to my music was impeccable. He is not only very knowledgeable in Peking Opera, but also in percussion. I was very glad and honored to be able to work with someone like him.

IHS: I have looked at the score for *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* and I have also watched the Peking Opera—*Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*—the one you said you adapted when you wrote *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*. I found all the singing passages in *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* are almost exactly the same pitches and lyrics taken from parts of *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*.

CHH: Yes, that is correct.

IHS: What was the particular reason that you chose those exact passages?

CHH: Actually, there are a series of compositions of mine focusing on female characters. I have written about the legend of the white snake—*LA SERPENT BLANCHE (2001)*—for percussion ensemble. I have written about Wang Zhao-Jun—*Wang Zhao-Jun (1998)*—for flute and piano duet. What else have I written based on female characters? I can’t seem to remember… Maybe it’s my age!

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14 The legend the white snake is a story about how a snake fairly named Lady White came down to earth in a human form and married a human, Xu Xiang. There is a Peking opera play The legend of the White Snake. Zhou Long wrote a Western opera based on the story of the white snake—*Madame White Snake (2010)* that won the Pulitzer Prize in 2011.


15 Wang Zhaojun (1st Century BC) was so beautiful that her appearance would attract the flying wild goose to fall from the sky. Wang Zhaojun was one of the four China’s ancient beauties. Like her peers, her fame was also tied to the political development of her time.

Oh yes, I have also written about Lin Dai-Yu\(^\text{16}\)—*A Dream of Red Mansions (2010)*—a six-mallet marimba solo piece. There is one more piece… I have written a flute concerto *The Legend of Lin Mo-Niang (2011)* about Mazu, also known as Lin Mo-Niang.\(^\text{17}\) You can see that I had a series of compositions based off of some important women in ancient Chinese history. Because I feel like being a female composer myself, I approach it from a female point of view to analyze and to evaluate how women in our ancient history thought and acted. I also feel that I could retell the stories of the great females in our history from my own point of view and give them a fresh look or a different life than what we have all known about them all this time. The main thing is to try to understand them and to be in their shoes, then to process it with all the information I have, my education, and my knowledge, in our time. That is why I wrote this series about women in Chinese history. *Mulan* is included in the series as well.

Hmm, why am I talking about this? What was your question again? Where was I? How did I get here? Oh yeah, as you can see, *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* is also part of this series. Obviously, I used the story of Mu Kuei-Yin in *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*. Like I have said previously, this piece was for a concert that had vocal music as its theme. Therefore, I wanted to combine the two cultures—the Peking Opera and the Western modern percussion music—in a way that I could use and glorify as many of the Peking operas’ vocal and singing characteristics as possible. So, when I was setting up the plot and the structure for the piece, I talked with the

\(^{16}\) Lin Dai-Yu is one of the main characters from the novel *A Dream of Red Mansions* by Cao Xueqin. The novel takes place in Qing Dynasty.


\(^{17}\) Mazu is the Chinese Goddess of the Sea. Mazu started out as a real character—Lin Mo-Niang born in the Song Dynasty and became a myth and legend later in Chinese history.

Peking opera actor and actress quite a lot. After countless discussions with them, we agreed that Mu Kuei-Yin is a very good and fitting character for the piece, so we basically took two passages from one of the famous Peking Opera plays about Mu Kuei-Yin—*Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*—and then it was my job to find a way to patch them—the passages—together. I mentioned before that I wanted to use, to present, and to glorify as many characteristics, singing styles and techniques from Peking Opera as possible. The reason we picked those two passages was because out of all of the passages from *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*, they present and require the most singing styles and techniques when compared with the rest of the passages. The first passage I adapted, which was in the first half of *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* was when Mu Kuei-Yin was struggling with her emotions and was trying to decided whether or not she should take the commander role and lead the army to fight for her country yet again. The reason she was struggling with the decision was there was no one else able to take the command and lead the army to fight that war, but the emperor had been mean to her family (the Yang family) and even neglected them for a long time because he was suspicious of the Yang family’s intentions. Therefore, Mu Kuei-Yin actually did not want to go to war for personal reasons because she was mad at the emperor and she felt she would lose the pride of the Yang family if she accepted the command as the emperor wished. However, another part of her felt she needed to take the command and fight this war for the people of the country for patriotic reasons. As you can see, her thought process during this passage is very complicated and filled with emotional conflict. She started with resentment, anger, and sadness then she decided she should put away all her personal feelings and put her country first and take the command, lead the army, and fight the war for the country. All these changes of emotions happen in that first passage I adapted in my piece so it was a very dramatic few minutes of the play. I felt that fit our goal—to show as many
singing styles and techniques as possible—very well and that is why we picked that passage. Like I have mentioned earlier, this was my first time using Peking opera as a major element in my composition so I wanted to preserve its originality as much as possible. While I adapted bits of *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*, I did not want to do too much cutting and altering of the original play. One reason is because that was my first time incorporating Peking Opera, I wanted to leave it as untouched as possible to preserve its perfection and to show its completion through only a small part of the Peking Opera play. However, I tried to sneak in the characteristics of the Western modern percussion music behind all these traditional Peking Opera passages as I wrote the music part to complete *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*.

IHS: So did they recommend those passages to you to start with?

CHH: No. It was actually I who told them my ideas about how to combine the two different cultures and what I wanted to do with it. They (the actor and the actress) then gave me suggestions on certain plays and certain passages that might be most suitable for what I was looking for. Because after all this was my first time incorporating Peking Opera in my work and I was still not very familiar with the essence and the history of Peking Opera. Peking Opera really is a very different culture, music, and art from modern Western percussion music. So during this process I think perhaps they gave me a few roles and a few passages to consider. I took their suggestions and did some research and I decided on the role Mu Kuei-Yin and the two passages I adapted in my piece. I discussed and consulted with them after I made the selections and they both agreed these were suitable.

IHS: Did they give you the score for the play *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command* or the passages?
CHH: Score? Did you mean the music score? No. They just told me what kind of melody\textsuperscript{18} was used for the passage and maybe some written music in the ancient Chinese notation form at most. All the harmonies and accompaniment parts were written by me.

IHS: So they did give you the melody to work with?

CHH: Yes. And you know how Chinese music is basically mainly unison. Well, maybe not exactly unison, but there is usually just one melody that is being sung by the actor and/or actress and it is being played by all melodic instruments in the ensemble at the same time. Therefore, you will hear one single melody being sung and played by different instruments simultaneously, not exactly in unison, but more or less happening in the same bar or measure from a musician point of view.

For example, while the actor or the actress is singing, the erhu\textsuperscript{19} is playing the same melody at the same time, but in a slightly different tempo. It is not even really different tempos. What they (the Peking Opera people) say is that each individual rhymes the same melody differently.\textsuperscript{20} They rhyme it at different points during the passages and therefore they sound like they are playing and singing the same passages/melodies, but they are not exactly together completely, like the usual unison.

\textsuperscript{18} There are two basic melodies for Peking Opera—\textit{xipi} and \textit{erhuang}.

Pan Xiaeng, \textit{The Stagecraft of Peking Opera} (Beijing: New World Press, 1995), 57.

\textsuperscript{19} Erhu is a Chinese two-stringed bowed instrument.

Philmultic Management & Productions Inc., \textit{Liu Fang-virtuosa of Chinese pipa and guzheng},

\textsuperscript{20} In Peking Opera music, all singers and musicians who play a melodic instrument are allow to bent the pitches and/or to add in ornaments individually base on the original melody. They call it "rhyming the melody."
IHS: So how does it work? Is it something like when they are playing and singing the same melody slightly out of time from each other but they need to stay on the same chord?

CHH: No, there is no chord. There is only the melody, and only one melody. They just magically figure out how some can play or sing faster and some can play or sing slower, but all of this is happening simultaneously. It then creates this miraculously mysterious phenomenon. This is one of the great beauties of Peking Opera. The oriental thoughts and our appreciation towards music in the East are a lot different from how people in the West think. In Western music we talk about chords a lot, but in Chinese music, we thrive on mono-melodic timbre. In other words, it is like we are all trying to draw some horizontal lines together but the wave, the highs and the lows of the shape of the lines are not totally the same. When you put all these lines together on the same piece of paper, that is what Chinese music sounds like. As you can see, this is very different than the way Western music sounds or the way it works. Western music focuses more on vertical lines, in other words—chords and harmonies, while Chinese music focuses more on the co-existence of the horizontal lines—the single melody that is being used by every musician, actor, and actress on stage at the same time but indifferent to one another.

IHS: I see. So this is why in *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* you had the actor, the actress, and all melodic instruments playing/singing the same melody but they all start at a different time from each other, like a quarter note off or something like that?

CHH: Yes, yes, yes. That is exactly the reason I wrote it that way, to mimic the music in the traditional Peking Opera, not just to adapt. This is based on the characteristic of oriental music. And because I was educated with Western music theory and history, I added in the vertical
lines—chords, harmonies, etc., to enrich the sound and to make it fuller. I added in other percussion as well. And this is how I created my version of Peking Opera.

IHS: Speaking of adding in additional percussions to incorporate your own characteristics in remaking the Peking Opera music, I saw some instrumentations in *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* that are clearly not Chinese percussion instruments, for example, flexatone. Obviously, the Chinese tom-toms, Peking Opera gongs and nao-ba are the original percussion instruments that already exist in the traditional Peking Opera. Were there any reasons for why you chose those particular Western percussion instruments?

CHH: No, not really. Well, there is only one reason and that is to disguise the cues and patterns of the Peking Opera gongs and drums (*luogudian*—鑼鼓點). When I was in the process of writing this piece, I did not want the audience to notice and to identify all the Peking Opera gong and drum patterns I adapted into the piece. Because the Peking Opera gong and drum patterns are very special and carry a lot of life in them. Hmm, how do I say it? Each Peking Opera gong and drum pattern has its own purpose and it changes the theatrical dynamic instantly whenever a gong and drum pattern is performed. It is actually the core of all Peking Opera plays because it basically conducts the pace of the show. That is why the Peking Opera gong and drum patterns are so famous and so easy to identify, and that is why I try to hide them by adding in more percussion instruments, the Western percussion instruments, that is. Basically, I was just trying to draw attention away from all the famous Peking Opera gong and drum patterns that I adapted into my piece. In some ways, I was hoping to scale down the theatric influences that would be brought out by the gong and drum patterns. I felt like since I was only using/adapting a passage or two from the original Peking Opera play—*Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*, I did not think showing the theatrical element, especially the theatrical developments in *Mu Kuei-Yin Take*
Command was that important to me. I prefer to have the audience enjoy and appreciate the beauty of the singing style and techniques, as well as the melody instead of being drawn to the gong and drum patterns and focusing on the theatriic part of the passage. Do you understand what I mean? That is why I purposely lighten up the gong and drum patterns in those passages and the approach I used was to replace them with other timbres and other sounds. This way the patterns then turned into a more subdued form. You can still hear the rhythms, but they are played by other instruments. For example, I did not use Chinese tom-toms, the Peking Opera large gongs, the Peking Opera small gongs, the nao-bas, etc., I used other instruments, like a beer bottle or something to replace the small gongs. Maybe sometimes I kept the Peking Opera large gong the way it was in a traditional Peking Opera play to preserve some layers within layers. That way you can still kind of hear bits of hints of the Peking Opera gong and drum patterns here and there, but it is not right in your face when you notice it. Does that make sense? So this is how I messed around with the gong and drum patterns when I adapted them into Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion.

IHS: Let’s take beer bottle for an example. Is there any hidden meaning of using the beer bottle? Since beer bottles exist both in Chinese culture and in Western culture?

CHH: No. The reason I used a beer bottle was purely for the timbre it provides. I did not put in that much thought about the meanings each individual instrument presents other than the sounds they have to offer.

IHS: When you first started rehearsing Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion, how did the members of the Ju Percussion Group react and did the Peking Opera actor and actress think it was very odd and new and/or express being intrigued by the cross-cultural combination?
CHH: Actually, I will say the whole process of the production was very difficult for the Peking Opera actor and actress to absorb and to follow. Because of what I just said about diluting the gong and drum patterns. The problem is, when we think it is only being diluted or hidden in a way, to Peking Opera actors and actress the patterns are nonexistent! In traditional Peking Opera, they look for what they call the *ban* and *yan*, which basically stands for meter in Western music language. For example, 3/4 is one *ban*-two *yans* and 2/4 is one *ban*-one *yan*. Therefore, when I disguised all the traditional gong and drum patterns and meters, it was very hard on the Peking opera actor and actress because they could not feel the time or find where they were in the music. Luckily, the Peking Opera actor and actress—Yuan-Cheng Sun and Chia-Hou Liu—were the ones who I worked with from the very beginning of the process for this production. They knew and understood what I was looking for, the passages and the melodies I chose, why I chose them, and what I wanted to do with the music part. However, that still did not make it any easier on them when we got to actually executing it. What they ended up doing was recording the percussion part, the music part of *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* and taking it home with them to listen to over and over again while reading the score. This was how they learned when they should walk on stage, when they should start singing, etc. They actually started to notice and identify the hidden gong and drum patterns over time and became more and more comfortable with the meter and time. They were even able to identify which instruments I replaced the gong and drum patterns with and took note to listen to that sound in order to identify the patterns as they came. Another really good thing about the actor and actress is that they are from the Guo Guang Opera Company. Guo Guang Opera Company knew this was going to be a cross-cultural production from the very beginning so they sent us the actor and actress who are the most experienced in working with cross-cultural productions. Therefore, even though it was still very
difficult for them throughout the whole process, they found their way to understand and to follow
the music I wrote after a few rehearsals. Eventually, they really came to not only enjoy the new
music for those passages from an original Peking Opera play, but to present the new style and
messages I wanted to send to the audience—to focus more on the music and less on the drama.

IHS: When I was watching the DVD of the premier performance you gave me, I noticed there
were some sections where the music parts were repeated for a random number of times while the
actor and actress slowly singing through their passages then end together. It feels like whatever
they played on stage was not 100% exact as it is on the score?

CHH: Well, this is actually one of the natures of the traditional Peking Opera music. It happens
all the time in the traditional Peking Opera plays too. Because they have something that is called
“slow tempo but fast singing,” “fast tempo, fast singing,” or “fast tempo, slow singing.”
Basically the actor and/or actress could sing in a totally different tempo than the rest of the band
is playing. But it will still sound harmonious and pleasant. So, yes, what you have identified was
correct and it was purposely staged that way as well. The whole point of singing and playing in
tempo is for theatrical tension. For example, Mu Kuei-Yin could be feeling very sad but also
very confused and conflicted inside, then she would sing in a slow tempo while all the
percussion is stirring up things and playing fast tempo to create the chaos and struggles she is
going through in her heart in the mean time. Does that make sense? In other words, the way the
traditional Peking Opera music was designed was able to show both sense and sensibility at the
same time in the music.

IHS: So during those non-notated repeating sections, did you tell the musicians to just keep on
playing until the actor and/or the actress is finished their passages?
CHH: Actually, all musicians were reading scores during the performance.

IHS: So they all played with the score?

CHH: Yes, yes. They all read the score, and after many rehearsals they also were more comfortable with the piece and were able to just swing with it. Anyway, they still always played with the score though. Well, I guess not always, they started with reading from the score, and then after a few rehearsals when the musicians were comfortable enough and started to know and remember when the actor and/or the actress would start singing the phrases, they switched to reading from the parts.

IHS: Then would you say in fact, there is flexibility and a lot of wiggle room while performing *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*?

CHH: Yes, there is a lot of flexibility allowed in this piece. This is all similar to the nature of the traditional Peking Opera. In traditional Peking Opera, the actors and the actresses are the main roles and characters in the play because they sing. I know that people say the lead drummer is the leader, but in fact, the lead drummer’s job is to watch the actors and the actresses acting on stage and to listen to them sing very carefully, then to lead the rest of the musicians playing along with what is happening on stage at the moment. In other words, the lead drummer is only a bridge between the actors/actresses and the musicians during the play. The ones who really lead the plays and set the pace of the plays are the actors and the actresses on stage. So generally speaking, the way I wrote *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* is like making the lead drummer part in the traditional Peking Opera plays not as important as it was. Basically there is no ‘lead drummer’ role in *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*, and that is why it was so difficult for the actor and the actress to sing along with the ensemble. It became their job to communicate with the musicians and to
understand the music without any ‘lead drummers’ cuing them due to the non-existence of the lead drummer. Therefore, it was very different from what they are used to—now they needed to catch up with the band instead of having the band catching up with them and accompanying them in the traditional Peking opera. It was even more difficult because in traditional Peking Opera, they deal with one single lead drummer versus in *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*, they deal with a group of musicians without a lead drummer. As you can imagine, they really struggled with the new changes a lot during the process of this cross-cultural production.

IHS: With the way *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* is written and with the flexibility that is secretly built into the piece, do you think if you gave this piece to another percussion group with a different Peking opera actor and actress, it would be a disaster?

CHH: (Laughs out loud.) No, I don’t think it would be a disaster. At least I don’t think it would be as bad as a boat capsizing! Because every performer and every ensemble has their own style and interpretation on every piece, it is then to be expected that you would have differences in the presentation of the same piece. Unless if that particular composer is extremely strict about how he/she wants his/her music to be performed, any changes or differences in the performance from one group to another, should not be as bad as the boat capsizing. There really are some composers who are like that—super strict about how the musicians need to perform the music as it is in every single detail and leave no room for changes or interpretations, and unfortunately, those composers usually have extremely good memories as well. That means they remember every single little detail of the piece and they will ask you to follow whatever they wrote. However, I don’t think that most composers are like that. Most composers are at least flexible to some degree and have tolerance for changes and surprises brought by the performers, because they have to. If they don’t have tolerance, then it will be either no one will play their music or
whenever their music is being played they will have a heart attack! Because there is simply nothing the composers can do about how the performers are actually performing their music. Wouldn’t you think? Moreover, in my opinion, surprises are actually good for the composers. Let’s take myself as an example. I write each piece with some particular thoughts for the piece and some imagination on how the piece will sound when it was finally performed. When the piece gets to the performers, the performers have their own way of looking at the piece and understanding it. Therefore, even with the performers knowing and understanding what my thoughts and intension were when I wrote the piece, they will still have their own interpretation and the piece will still be presented not in a way that is totally what I imagined. That is actually good for me because often times I find the performers giving me more ideas about the piece than had previously struck my mind. It is very inspiring actually and it makes you understand your own piece more and more. I actually like it when the performers make changes to my piece because I like the inspiration that comes with it. Especially when my music is in the hands of great musicians who take my music seriously and do a lot of work or research on it, then present it in a surprising way, it is a very touching moment to me every single time. As you can probably tell, I am very happy about the fact the musicians have different thoughts about my music and make changes to it.

IHS: Let’s talk a little more about cross-cultural productions. Do you think all these cross-cultural productions have any influences on the current culture of Taiwan?

CHH: Hmm, influence? Honestly speaking, the influence is not just in Taiwan. Because of how everything has developed around the world, I feel like we are in a global village. Every culture on this planet impacts and influences other cultures, so things are starting to melt together and get combined together like the cross-cultural productions. I feel this is an unavoidable trend and
the world does seem a lot smaller in a sense. Don’t you feel you are actually close to anything in
the world, wherever you are, at all times now? For example, we can hear lots of music from Bali
in Taiwan and it has nothing to do with how far away or close Bali is to Taiwan. Not just music
from Bali actually, we can hear music from any country at any time in Taiwan and it doesn’t
matter how far away that country is. I feel this is the culture of our time, our generation.
Basically, you can get anything you want in a very short time now so we are always exposed to
everything, and you no longer feel like a stranger to a new culture or new things anymore. It
became part of your life gradually and became the fertilizer for composing. Therefore, I do feel
like this is the trend, the fashion of the music nowadays. Moreover, composers are not easily
satisfied with pure original music—classical, romantic, etc.—anymore. Perhaps not so much for
the listeners, but for composers, because they think about so many different things when they
write. They found those types of music are no longer able to fulfill the desire in their ears or
eyes. Therefore, they started to look for things outside of what they were taught and knew in
hopes that by combining different things or new things, it would fulfill their creativeness.
Sometimes I feel that all the music around us is just not enough food for my next piece, so I will
look for things other than music to inspire me and to find a way to incorporate that into my
music. I actually think we composers not only have very vivid creativeness in our process of
composing, but we also have visions of how we want our music to be and how it will turn out. I
really do think that is just how artists naturally are and I usually am really clear about what
things I want in my compositions. It is not that we combine things all the time purposely, this is
just how our world is and how our life is surrounded by all kinds of stuff to adapt it into your
works. For example, people say that we are more and more visually oriented animals now and I
think it is because we did not have television before. However, we are now exposed to and
always surrounded by televisions wherever we go. Before televisions were invented, people just used their ears most of their life, so they depended on listening. Now that the television is available in every household, we watch television everyday and we depend on it much more than we do listening, even little kids are glued to the TV all the time now. It only makes sense that we rely on visual stimulations more and more now.

IHS: Both the production of *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* and the production of *Mulan* used traditional elements—Peking Opera. Do you feel that this kind of cross-cultural production provokes our awareness to pay more attention to our own culture and to draw us back to our traditions? I have gotten the feeling that the number of the audiences for traditional Peking Opera is a lot smaller than the number of the audience for modern Western music or pop music. Are ticket sales for solely traditional Peking Opera plays struggling?

CHH: No, you are wrong about that. It is actually us—the people who were educated in Western music education system—who did not pay much attention or interest to going to traditional Peking Opera plays. I went to a lot of traditional Peking Opera plays when I was studying for both productions and I have to tell you, it was totally packed! Always! They have their own group of fans and regular audiences who buy tickets to come again and again. Moreover, the Peking Opera culture is actually changing everyday too. They have also made changes to improve Peking Opera over time. Otherwise, Guo Guang Opera Company would not have done these cross-cultural productions with us, right? Just like how we combine things to make new music, our cross-cultural production for them is like reaching out from their own culture to adapt different cultures into the traditional Peking Opera. Director Hiao-Ping told me himself that a cross-cultural production like this was impossible and would have never happened in the Peking Opera field ten years ago because they are extremely conservative. However, they also have
realized that being extremely conservative and sticking with what they have always had is a dead end for the market of Peking Opera. The reason all the Peking Opera actors and actresses that we worked with, as well as director Hiao-Ping, were so passionate about our productions and were very cooperative this whole time is because they know this is the way to go and there is a way out of this new form of Peking Opera. Moreover, after working the productions with us, they were more inspired by all the new experiences and new cultures they were exposed to. So when they went back to their own traditional Peking Opera, they were more sensitive to details and were able to improve their plays in a lot of ways—being more musical, etc. Therefore, the benefits from these cross-cultural productions were actually received by both sides—Ju Percussion Group and Guo Guang Opera Company. We did not know how popular Peking Opera actually is because we did not pay attention to it ourselves. Peking Opera nowadays is actually a lot more interesting and enjoyable than it was before. It is even funny sometimes. It is no longer just always sad with a lot of crying themes. They have also started to adopt and experiment with more colorful theatrical shows in Peking Opera plays. The cross-cultural productions Guo Guang Opera Company did with us were using the original plays, or more accurately some passages taken from the original plays to mix with new music. On the other hand, they can try to use their own music but adapt other theatrical elements, other dramas to create another new kind of Peking Opera. For example, the artistic director of the Contemporary Legend Theatre, Mr. Hing-Guo Wu, did a cross-cultural production that adapted Shakespeare plays into Peking Opera and it was a big success. You can say that the Peking opera actors, actress, and musicians know that the Peking Opera has a very long history and developed to its fullness and its peak a long time ago. So if you want to move forward even more, you have to overcome the

conservativeness and step out of your comfort zone to let new elements join the old Peking Opera, in order to give it some new life. This is very different from the situation for we percussionists or for writing percussion music. Percussion is considered a new group of instruments and new sounds so we can basically do whatever we want and take some risks in creativity. And people will just accept it and love it. Due to the long history of Peking Opera and its perfection as is, it became very hard for them to find new things to add into their tradition that would work well and please the audience. We percussionists can basically do whatever we want and people will buy it! We are not the only group that Guo Guang Opera Company did cross-cultural productions with.

They also worked with Chai Found Music Workshop\(^{22}\) and If Kids Theatre\(^{23}\) before. They (Guo Guang Opera Company) actually have done a lot of cross-cultural productions with many different groups already. Our cross-cultural productions with them were just a little part of their branching out project. We were not aware of this because we were busy doing our own stuff all this time. I think they even did some cross-cultural productions involving pop culture.

IHS: So did all these cross-cultural productions and the new trend in arts performance change the composition of the audience gradually? For example, did people who love percussion concerts,


but do not know much about Peking Opera, start to show interest in and start to go to Peking Opera plays after seeing *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* and/or *Mulan*? And vise versa?

CHH: Well, unfortunately, I have no idea. This is not the area of my study. I’m sorry. You will have to ask the staff in the marketing department of the Ju Foundation for this answer.

IHS: Did you take any Peking Opera classes before?

CHH: Yes. I took some Peking Opera classes after I started studying with Mr. Ju. You know, after Mr. Ma suggested that I go study with Mr. Ju while I was at NIA. Mr. Ju is just as insightful as Mr. Ma. Mr. Ju said while we study and learn how to play percussion, we should not only focus on Western percussion music and instruments, but also study our own percussion music and culture. When I was studying at NIA, myself and two other founding members of the Ju Percussion Group—Mr. Jue-Win Chang and Mr. Chi-Hong Chen (now named Li-Feng Chen) went to take lessons from Mr. Yo-Chung Ho, who was considered a national treasure. Mr. Ho passed away years ago. We took money out of our own pockets to go to his house to study Peking Opera percussion with him. I think we were actually the last few students he took in at the end of his life. I remembered we went to his house every Saturday afternoon for lessons for like a year or two. Basically, we continued to take lessons with him until he passed away. We only learned about the percussion part of the Peking Opera. By the time we were ready to move on to the singing styles and techniques, he passed away. It was a real pity. However, I can say that we got the fundamental of the percussion part down pretty solidly. Because we not only had to memorize all the different patterns, different calls, and different cues, at the time we also had to watch his hands and his gestures, basically his conducting and know how to react, not just by listening. I don’t remember any of it now. I’m sorry! However, I really was pretty solid back
then. I memorized every pattern and was able to react to his conducting. By the time he was about to teach us how to incorporate all the percussion patterns we learned into the actual Peking Opera plays, he had fallen ill. That was when we stopped taking lessons from him. That was very sad, actually.

IHS: The difficulties and problems you ran into with Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion from the very first rehearsal to the day of performance, would you say they were mostly problems or struggles for the Peking Opera actor and actress?

CHH: I think they actually were really willing to cooperate with us. I feel they even put away their pride while working with us. How do I say this? I think one of the reasons was because there were only two of them, but there were six of us, the musicians. Obviously, they felt they were outnumbered, so it was impossible for them to try to dominate us during the process. Also, the three of us had been working together from the very beginning so they knew what direction I was planning on taking this project and what the music part might sound like. They voluntarily offered to record the music for themselves to take home to listen to and study with the score before the rehearsals started.

IHS: So the Peking Opera actor and actress were already well prepared and ready by the first rehearsal?

CHH: They were prepared. I think it is because they had experience in cross-cultural productions before, even if it was not the same kind of culture they worked with before. They knew what kind of homework they might have to do to make the process smoother and they were very proactive about it. Actually, there was one performance we switched the Peking Opera actor and actress to perform with us. I don’t exactly remember where we were doing the performance, but I
remember Miss Liu and Mr. Sun were busy with another project with Guo Guang Opera
Company at the time so we had to switch to another actor and actress. The new actor and actress
watched the DVD of our previous performance to learn how to perform this piece and they
learned it pretty fast too. In some ways, the Peking Opera players nowadays are pretty versatile
and usually have experiences on cross-cultural productions, therefore, it is not as impossible as
you might think for them to accomplish this project and it also did not take them as long as you
might have thought it would. Moreover, like I have said before, my first piece involving Peking
Opera—*Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* still preserves most of the Peking Opera tradition in its
original form. I used the original roles, costumes, even the passages were exactly the same, taken
from *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*. The only thing I really changed was the timing of the
passages. The melodies of the passages are the same as the originals. As a result, it was not too
difficult for the Peking Opera players to learn how to perform *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* and
they all learned it comparatively fast. All they needed to do was to understand how the gong and
drum patterns sounded so they knew when to come in and how to adjust their timing as it went
along.

IHS: After you started rehearsing *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*, did you feel the outcome of the
rehearsals and the final product were pretty close to what you had imagined when you were
writing the piece? Or not?

CHH: Of course I can’t say it was 100% exactly the same as what I had imagined, but I would
say it was about 90% the same as how I had hoped it would turn out. I would just make minor
adjustments as we went. Sometimes it was because what I had imagined was too perfect and was
impossible to do. Then I had to change it. Other times were actually much better than what I had
imagined it could turn out to be. Then it was great.
IHS: Do you think there were any influences for *Mulan* from your experience with *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*?

CHH: Well, of course. Because by the time I wrote *Mulan*, I already had experience incorporating Peking opera in my music and working with the Peking opera players. I understood more about Peking Opera then. So basically, *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* was really a beginner piece for future related cross-cultural productions like *Mulan*. In addition to that, we did not have a Peking Opera director working with us while doing *Mu Kuei-Yin in Percussion*, so I basically did whatever I wanted and whatever I could come up with at the time. When we were rehearsing *Mu Kui-Yin In Percussion*, it was mostly based on a tacit understanding between the actor and the actress to make this happen. Actually, during that process one of them kind of acted like a director. I think that was one of the reasons they struggled with the rehearsals so much in the beginning because they were very used to the way Peking Opera rehearses—always having a director. It is different in music. We do not always need a conductor. However, in Peking Opera they always have a director to run the rehearsals since they are a type of theatre. Therefore, the Peking Opera actor and actress asked me who the director was for this production at the first rehearsal and I told them there wasn’t one. They were kind of weird about it and very concerned about the fact we did not have a director. So I told them: “No, we don’t have a director to work with this time. We are a music group and this is more like a musical production than a theatrical production.” However, they still needed someone to direct them as to when to come on stage, when to walk off stage, when to start singing, when to do certain gestures, movements, etc., because they are an actor and actress after all. I was able to direct them by showing them how the music sounded and when the passages started. All I could tell them and help them with were music related items and when to sing. They still needed someone to direct them for the timing of
the theatrical elements. At the end, Mr. Sun, the actor decided to step in and design the theatrical part for *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*. For example, after some discussion, we added in lighting changes. After all, they need this kind of stuff—theatrical presentation—because they are an actor and actress. Overall, the second production—*Mulan* was completely different than *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* because we had a director for *Mulan*. The director brought many different ideas for the productions to the table on his own, and my job was to bring in all the possibilities for the music part of the production. We put *Mulan* together one step at a time. The director gave me the outline of the play—the production—first. Then I came up with all the musical possibilities I could think of and wrote the music part based on his script. Basically, he gave me his ideas first. Then I returned with my ideas—my music. After he heard my music, he found some parts or sections where he could add in more dramatic elements according to the music. Then he would make minor changes as we went. After that, I would have more to write and then he would make more changes. Basically, we were passing the ball back and forth to each other’s court for a long time. Therefore, the way *Mulan* was put together and how it is as a cross-cultural production is totally different from how we did *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*.


CHH: Hmm… I think that’s all. Oh wait, does *Kao-à-hì Pantasy (2011)* count?

IHS: I would say so.
CHH: Yeah, I think so too because the elements and the themes were taken from Kao-à-hí.24

IHS: Was it Mr. Ju’s idea to do a cross-cultural production like Kao-à-hí Pantasy?

CHH: It was for a steel drums concert. In my opinion, the timbre of steel drums reminds me of the synthesizer on the local techno dance company trucks in Taiwan. Wouldn’t you say so? Also, I found the history of the steel drums and how it was invented very interesting because basically it was invented or discovered randomly and out of nowhere. They were just some used oil barrels before someone turned them into an instrument. I also feel that it is very hard to connect the appearance of the steel drums to the color of the sound they produce, because they were once just used oil barrels. I found the whole history of how steel drums were invented and how they became the local traditional music in Trinidad very interesting. Then I was thinking, how would traditional Trinidad music turn out if it came to Taiwan? That is when I decided to try to incorporate some of our own traditional music into this piece. Because I felt a connection between the sound the steel drums produce and that of the synthesizers on our local techno truck, I decided to adapt the techno San Tai Zi25 into Kao-à-hí Pantasy. That was how I got this cross-cultural idea. Interestingly, I also feel like steel drums not only sound like synthesizer, but also have a very gentle sound at the same time. That is why I wrote such a soft and beautiful theme for the first part of Kao-à-hí Pantasy, and of course I also put in Western harmonies for the Kao-à-hí melodies, just because it is a habit of mine when I write. Kao-à-hí Pantasy has two parts—

24 Kao-à-hí is a type of traditional music that originated in Yi-Lan, Taiwan.


25 Nezha is a deity, popularly known as San Taizi (三太子) or Third Prince, because he was born the third son of General Li Jing (李靖), according to Taoist mythology.

slow and fast. The slow part, which is the first part, is mellow and beautiful. And the fast part, which is the second part, is influenced by Taiwanese popular culture.

IHS: For all the cross-cultural productions you have done, would you say Les Douze Lunes Du Serpent is the most different or unique? Since it was a cross-cultural production with another country, not just another culture within the same country?

CHH: Les Douze Lunes Du Serpent (2001) is more interesting in a way for two reasons. One is because it was commissioned by Les Percussions de Strasbourg. It was for their 40th anniversary celebration concert and they wanted the piece to be a collaboration between two composers. Therefore, it was actually a set of pieces composed by two different composers. The pieces came together as a whole and were entitled Les Douze Lunes Du Serpent. So each composer wrote… hmm…

IHS: Six months of the year?

CHH: No, not exactly. We each wrote two seasons out of four. Because it was for their 40th anniversary, they even flew to Taiwan, including the composer François Bernard Mâche to discuss how to do this project. Obviously, I live in Taiwan and François lives in France, so there was just no way we could write the piece together. Therefore, we decided to divide it into sections. Since we wanted to write for the whole year—four seasons, Les Percussions de Strasbourg asked us which year it was in Chinese calendar and it was the year of snake. That is why the title of the piece is Les Douze Lunes Du Serpent. We decided to divide the piece into four seasons. He was assigned to write Spring and Fall, and I was assigned to write Summer and Winter. The way Mâche wrote his Spring and Fall movements was really just a portrait of the season. I think it is because Mâche is French and French composers are usually very good at
portraying nature and landscapes. I, on the other hand, because of the Chinese culture, decided to use the legend of the white snake as the baseline for my part (the year of snake is a special year and it has the story of the legend of the white snake). Therefore, why I chose to write my parts in this way was due to several cultural factors I found I resonated with. I also divided my seasons—summer and winter—into the legend of the white snake part one and part two. The premier in France was very unique and interesting, I think. My music was pretty dramatic and very theatrical too. And Mâche’s music was very calm. Because basically, he was just portraying the seasons of spring and fall. It was kind of interesting and funny that after the whole concert, I felt like his movements were like the perfect introductions or preludes for my movements. Really! For example, his movement of spring feels like all life begins or is coming back to life, and then my summer movement is telling the story of how Lady White and Mr. Xu met at the West Lake and fell in love. So the music is very theatrical. The summer movement ended with the scene of the flooded JinShan Temple. Then his fall movement set the mood for my winter movement. At least that is what I think, because the fall movement portrayed leaves falling and such and I felt like it was the perfect music to set the mood for my second part of the story. Anyway, so the second part of the legend of the white snake—the winter movement—starts with the Lady White being pregnant and giving birth to her son. What’s the son’s name? I don’t remember. I think it is probably Jiao-Long Bai. I’m not really sure. Anyway, the beginning of the movement is portraying labor and the contractions. By the way, she had a difficult, long labor, and she was confined and imprisoned under the Leifeng Padoda right after birth. After that, she had to wait until her son grew old enough to go rescue her. Basically, that was my story for the winter movement. It is surprising how the whole piece turned out. It was paced really well, like we had planned it. Every one, even the French thought we had planned it and asked us how we did this
from being in two different countries and so far away? We were all surprised by how matched all four movement were when you put them all together. It was just amazing how we did it under two different cultures, at the same time, in different places—countries, but it still worked perfectly together. You felt no awkwardness in any of the transitions in the piece. I think it is because Mâche wrote about nature for his movements, like the fall movement was about harvest and the falling leaves, etc. I really think it is very interesting how this whole project turned out.

IHS: Of all the cross-cultural productions you have done, which one has had the biggest impact on you?

CHH: I think it is probably the most recent one—Mulan. Because all the previous cross-cultural productions were basically still free for me to write whatever I wanted. For example, even though Les Douze Lunes Du Serpent was a cross-cultural production between two percussion groups and two composers from two different countries, it ended up being that Mâche wrote his part and I wrote my part. However, what makes Mulan more special to me is because we were working with a director. In addition to that, director Hiao-Ping is actually a very wonderful person, who is very knowledgeable in many aspects of life, not just Peking Opera and theatre. I learned a lot by working with him and it was a very inspiring experience. I felt like the whole time I was working on Mulan, I received more than I had given out.

IHS: I have two more questions. The first one is: when I was little, I felt like the trend back then was to fantasize, to fuss over, and to look up to all the performing artists and cultures from other countries. However, I have gotten the feeling that after all these years, that artists coming from abroad are no longer as fancy as they were before. Since we get so many of them nowadays very
easily. It seems that the new trend is to combine cultures in the performing arts. What do you think?

CHH: No, it is just like what I mentioned before. It is actually because we are hungry for a new change. I don’t think it is only happening in Taiwan. I think it is happening all over the world. We are not satisfied with what we have and where we are so we look into other fields to see what they have been doing and what possibilities their fields offer? We then just combine our own art and culture with the others. It then creates influence, impact, struggles, etc. The more you do this the more new possibilities await you in your field. Therefore, I think it is more because of the creators’ (composers, writers, painters, etc.) needs. That is why the cross-cultural productions are happening more and more at this time in our generation.

IHS: When I listen to your works, although you were educated with Western music and studied in France for eight years, your music is colored very heavily by your roots, your background as being a female Asian composer who is Taiwanese. My question is: How do you incorporate this into your teaching?

Do you think it is very important for the students to find their roots, or to not forget their roots? And do you ask and require your students to emphasize their own culture when they write? Or do you not care, and encourage them to do whatever they wish, and to find their own sound?

CHH: No, I would not ask my students to only write about their own culture and background. I think of myself as a pretty free and open-minded person and I think it was because my teacher Mr. Ma gave me that influence. Of course back then when I was studying with Mr. Ma, he would tell us we should not forget our own culture or something like that. However, I feel like your generation is different than my generation, so what you have been exposed to when you were
growing up would be different than what I have been exposed to. Composers and all creators react to their surroundings, what they have been exposed to, and what they know. Therefore, I think that every generation has its own things, they do not have to be the same as what was before them. Also, creativity is something you cannot twist around. Do you know what I mean? I can’t brainwash you with my own ideas and force you to write my music, can I? Mr. Ma always said to us: “One can not teach composition. One can teach the compositional techniques but one can not teach the creative process of the composition.” Therefore, I think I am an open-minded educator. Your generation should actually be more well-educated and well-informed than our generation because you have received so much more information since the time you were little that we did not know. In theory, the creativity in your generation should be more full and colorful than ours, especially considering how much technology has developed since then. You see all the televisions, have used composers, hear and know synthesizers and techno music, etc. These are all more than what we had before, so your creative process should be based on more elements than mine. Do you know what I mean?

I also once discussed with Mr. Ma about why it seemed like there are gaps in the developments of Chinese music or oriental music. Or why it seems that sometimes it is in a spiral motion and cannot get out or move forward? Mr. Ma’s thought was because Chinese music was not notated or written down. When a kind of music is not written down, it is more difficult to move forward or to pass on because it is harder for the people in the next generation to study it, and to pass it on, or to make improvements, etc. Western music was always notated. So there are scores for the students or younger composers to study. Therefore, it is easier for them to analyze it, to understand it, and to make changes for improvement, to move on. Moreover, I feel like people in the West take passing on the culture and moving on very seriously. They not only
accept the changes and improvements, but also encourage the next generation to do so. That is why new music is so popular in France, even for the old generation. Because the old generation feels like this is what the younger generation is supposed to do. And they are more than happy to embrace the change. Generally speaking, for French people, this is how their culture carries on. So they would not deny it. They would accept it. Of course, they would listen to it and they would not like it all the time. And they can say they do not like it. However, they would still accept it. They would not say this is wrong, or something like that. Therefore, I think it is probably because I was educated in France, and with their influence on me, that I feel like it is OK to have different voices, and different ideas on your own. I think that is about it.
CHAPTER II. THE TRADITIONAL PEKING OPERA

2.1: THE ORIGIN OF PEKING OPERA

According to Luo Chang in his *20 Lectures on Chinese Operas*\(^\text{26}\), the origin of Chinese Opera came from the combination of three things: a.) singing and dancing from ritual performances for festivals and religion; b.) arias and recitatives of the story telling culture; and c.) puppet shows. Various types of Chinese Operas can be found beginning with the Qin dynasty. However, the birth of Peking Opera is generally recognized as occurring during the Qing dynasty, when in 1790, Emperor Qianlong held massive celebrations in the capital city of Beijing to commemorate his eightieth birthday. During the events honoring this special occasion, the *Sanqing* Opera Troupe from Anhui province introduced the *erhuang* singing style, which differed greatly from the *xipi* singing style popular in Beijing at the time. The combination of these two singing styles became the standard for what is now used in modern day Peking Opera. The opera performances at Qianglong’s celebration were well received. So much so that, from the mid-1800s on, operas troupes were granted imperial patronage, which in turn promoted Peking Opera’s status nationwide. The name Peking Opera comes from both its geographical location and from the language associated with it, Mandarin. At the time, Mandarin was the language used in the capital, Beijing, and has since become the national language of China. Soon after its name was established and the art form was recognized, wealthy patrons also began sponsoring the Peking Opera troupes, promoting an influx of talented performers. Nancy A. Guy states that: “By the late nineteenth century, Peking Opera had become the most widespread and

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popular of all operatic forms in China. It remains the most well known of Chinese opera forms both inside and outside of China.\textsuperscript{27}

The following timeline detailing the development of Peking Opera is provided by the Guo Guang Opera Company\textsuperscript{28}.

\textbf{Figure 2.1. Timeline of the development of Peking Opera}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Development of Peking Opera</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1790-1880</td>
<td>The birth and forming of the Peking Opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-1917</td>
<td>The maturation period of Peking Opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-1937</td>
<td>Peking Opera reaches its peak in 1917. During the time to follow, the Japanese invade China and cause the Peking Opera, along with many other traditional Chinese artistic and cultural activities, to diminish in prominence or go underground. This significantly hinders the development of Peking Opera.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-1949</td>
<td>China is at war with Japan, as well as civil wars within its own people. The development of Peking Opera is subsequently unstable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-1967</td>
<td>The Republic of China reforms Peking Opera for its own political purpose.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{27} Nancy A. Guy, “Peking Opera and Politics in Post-1949 Taiwan” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1996), 29-30.

Cultural exchanges between China and Taiwan bring new life and changes to Peking Opera

2.2: ROLE TYPE CATEGORIES

Like everything else in Peking Opera, role types differ from those in western opera, both in how they are categorized, and in the criteria used to establish these categories. In his book *Peking Opera*, Colin Mackerras discusses the topic:

In Western opera the categorization of roles generally follows the distinctions of vocal range, with gender implied in those distinctions: soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, and bass. In the Peking Opera categories, and indeed those of other forms of Chinese drama, vocal range is not a central factor, but the gender of the character is essential, with age, social status, rank, and personality being important as well. Another factor which enters into the role types is the division so crucial to all Chinese drama, that between civilian and military.²⁹

Generally speaking, there are four primary role-types in Peking Opera:

- *Sheng*—standard male characters
- *Dan*—female characters
- *Jing*—painted-face male characters
- *Chou*—ugly characters or clowns, often comic and usually male

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In addition to these four categories, there are more detailed sub-categorizations based on age and special performance skills like acrobatics, combat, etc. The detailed categorized roles are as following:

- **Laosheng**—educated and dignified men, usually older in age. The officials and emperors. *Laosheng* are generally of a higher social status and wear long beards.

- **Xiaosheng**—younger men, scholars, and never wear beards.

- **Wusheng**—generals or any man who takes part in battles.

- **Wuxiaosheng**—young military males. Young generals or some young men who are skilled in the martial arts.

- **Qingyi**—young female. *Qingyi* are usually female characters of high moral standards with great expectations for themselves. For example, a filial daughter, a devoted wife or lover, a good mother, etc. *Qingyi* tend to look downward and are generally subdued in action.

- **Huadan**—translated as ‘flower female role’. *Huadan* are more seductive and flirtatious than *qingyi*. They are sometimes of questionable character.

- **Wudan**—female fighters who are skilled in the martial arts.

- **Laodan**—old female characters. Usually an older mother or other aged woman.

- **Wenjing**—civilian painted-face male.

- **Wujing**—military painted-face male.
In addition to the gender and personality traits described above, makeup, costumes, and headdresses give strong visual clues as to which personification a particular character belongs. Moreover, the vocal presentation—the vocal timbre, the type of language used in speech, the manner of laughing and crying, and melodies being sung—could easily distinguish the differences in the role types as well. (Guy 1996: 34)

2.3: ACTING, COMBAT, AND SOMERSAULTING

**Acting**

Acting in Peking Opera is mainly realized via particular gestures and movements ascribed to the role type and emotional status of a particular character. All Peking Opera actors’ and actresses’ basic training starts with various theatrical steps. The gestures include palm, hands, and fingers movements equating to specific meanings. Another basic training is the stereotype of how each role type should walk. Pan Xiafeng provides examples of such in his book *The Stagecraft of Peking Opera*:

There are also various gestures with palm, fist and fingers such as *lashanbang* (standing with both arms outstretched, one hand clenching and the other pushing) and *qiyunshou* (overlapping hands movement as though holding a ball) before circling the stage, which are given special attention in training courses…. A distinguished opera actor is able to take full advantage of skillful acting to create many characters with different personalities while strictly abiding by the rules of stylization.

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30 *Huadan, chou,* and some *jing* speak in colloquial language—*jingbai.* The rest of the characters speak in an artificial stage language—*yunbai* (a cross between everyday language and classical Chinese).

Luo Chang details examples of such specialized movements assigned for each role type in his book *20 Lectures on Chinese Opera* regarding the movement *shuishou*\(^32\), Chang states:

Fluttering and waving the *shuishou* presents all different attitudes of the characters: if you dropped the *shuishou* very fast and with a little force, it means you are mad and declining the offer; if you picked up the *shuishou* and put it over your head, it means you are terrified or devastated; if you waved the *shuishou* in circular motion continuously, that means you are very agitated, impatient, and are in a hurry. (Luo 2006: 31-32)

**Combat**

The fight scenes in Peking Opera are divided into two categories—duels and group fights. The duels are called *kaida* and the group fights are called *qida*. (Pan 1995: 64) Methods of fighting are also divided in two ways—barehanded combat and armed combat. No matter which type of combat is being performed, all combats are choreographed and very “dance-like” instead of real fighting. Usually, battles between two individual characters are presented as barehanded unless the scene takes place on a battlefield. Battles between groups are usually presented as armed combats. The music for group battles is very fast and exciting, and corresponds to the choreographed combat movements that are happening on stage. (Luo 2006: 32)

**Somersaulting**

In Peking Opera, somersaulting—*fangendou*—is a series of stylized movements of leaping, springing, jumping and flying. There are various types of somersaults: big (long), small (short) and high (from table to the ground). Besides leaping, jumping, springing, and flying, the

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\(^{32}\) *Shuishou* is translated as the water sleeves. It is basically a very long sleeve extended by a simply piece of long white cloth.
Somersaults may sometimes imitate the movements of a cat, dog, or some other animal. Somersaults are also usually included in battle scenes. (Pan 1995: 67)

Pan Xiafeng provides us more detailed examples of some of these somersaults in *The Stagecraft of Peking Opera*:

An actor begins to learn somersaults with the assistance of this teacher, who supports him to get the movements right. ‘Precise somersaults and straight steps’ was a saying often heard in old-time opera circles, which means that a somersault must have a stable start and precise fall, unlike an aimless throw, and the stage steps must be straight forward with lifted feet, rather than crooked and twisted ones…. the *hutiao qianpu* (front tigerleap) is required to be like ‘a ball in the air and a thread in falling.’ This means that the actor’s body rolls like a ball at the moment of his spinning in the air and falls stably like an upright thread. (Pan 1995: 67, 68)

### 2.4: COSTUMES, HEADGEAR, AND ADORNING THE FACE

**Costumes and Headgear**

Unlike the simplicity of the stage design in Peking Opera, the costumes, the headgear, and the make-up are far more colorful, complex, and artistic. Each costume is designed to match and present the gender, personality, and role of its character. One interesting fact is that all the costumes are designed based on the clothing in the Ming dynasty. All actors and actresses wear these costumes regardless which period, which season, or which region the play is set. There are a few staples in the costume department: (Luo 2006: 44)

- Emperors, royal family members, or aristocracy always wear a yellow robe. The length of the male robes is to the toes but the length of the female robes is just above the knee height. There is a dragon on the male robes and a phoenix on the female robes.
• The robes for government officials have a square patch of some animal pattern on the chest and the back areas.

• Generals, male or female, usually have four triangular flags attached to their back to evoke the image of power.

• Other martial arts characters that are not official generals will have two plumes of a pheasant tails attached to their helmets.

• A black robe with multiple colored patches is worn by a character that is currently poor but will be rich in the future.

• Shuishoa (translated to “water-like sleeves”) are attached to the coat of some female roles and only female roles.

• Male shoes are tall wedges while female shoes are embroidered flats.

Adorning the Face

The make-up for Peking Opera roles is far more intricate than that of its Western opera counterparts’. The most complex make-up is for jing—the ‘painted face’, then chou—the clowns, then sheng and dan. The purpose of the make-up in Peking Opera roles is to make the actors’ and actress’ faces look like the character they portraying, both in reality and symbolically. However, as goes makeup in Peking Opera, reality and symbolism are sometimes in conflict. In such instances, artistry will outweigh reality and greater emphasis is put on the symbolic features that the character is to represent. Therefore, the make-up may be presented with some exaggeration.
One of the reasons that the make-up of jing is so colorful and complex is that it was developed over the centuries from masks used in ceremonial dances. Masks are very rare in contemporary Peking Opera, opting instead for the use of make-up. Mackerras asserts that:

The painted face is not merely beautiful and complex; it is a highly symbolic art. There are two main features of the make-up: colour and design. The combination enables the audience to identify the character immediately and to discern something about his or her personality…. The actor accentuates the symbolism of the painted face by exaggerating the feature he is trying to show, be it anger, good nature, integrity, or whatever.” He also stated “A wide range of colours is used on the face, including read, purple, black, white, blue, green, and yellow. Although these colours were originally intended to enhance the natural complexion of the character, they gradually came to represent the temperament of the characters. It is rare for a painted face to have a single colour only. (Mackerras 1997: 47)

The clowns have a white patch over the nose and around the eyes. However, the shape of the patch varies greatly. Similar to jing, the clowns’ temperament also varies greatly and the shape of the white patch is intended to portray the temperament as well.

It is generally enough to just apply powder and rouge to the face for sheng and dan roles instead of painting it. However, the lips and the area around the eyes must be reddened, particularly the female roles. Most male roles wear beards except for xiaosheng. (Mackerras 1997: 46)

2.5: THE STAGE

The old-style Chinese stage was square, with two poles on either side at the front and the audience seated on three sides, or sometimes on all sides. Which means the audience could watch the play from the back of the stage. Several of these traditional stages survive in Beijing. Figure 2.2 is a photo of the traditional Peking Opera stage in the Summer Palace in Beijing.
Unlike the luxurious sets used for most Western operas, the stage in traditional Peking Opera is almost completely bare, with a great deal left to the imagination. There is only a curtain at the back of the stage, not at the front. Instead of opening and closing the curtains to signal the start and the end of an act (or a play), as is the case in Western operas, traditional Peking Opera uses music to relay to the audience the start and the end of the show. In most cases, there are only a rug, a desk, and maybe chairs on stage. It is important to leave imagination to the audience so actions like opening a door and going through it, riding a horse, rowing a boat, etc., are all realized via the acting. In summary, the acting in traditional Peking Opera is very symbolic. In the modern theatres however, it is now customary to draw the curtains to show the
start and the end of the scene/act/play even for the most traditional pieces, and this practice follows the common practice of Western opera. (Mackerras 1997: 38-39)

2.6: PEKING OPERA MUSIC

The Peking Opera orchestra

The traditional Peking Opera orchestra consists of two main sections—wenchang (the civil section) and wuchang (the martial section). The wenchang is composed of the strings (instruments with skin)—jinghu, jingerhu, yueqin, and sanxian, and the winds—dizi, suona, and sheng. (Pan 1995: 69) According to Sin-Yan Shen in China: A Journey into Its Musical Art33, the role of the percussion is traditionally more important than that of the winds and the strings in Chinese theatrical music, except in Kunqu34. In Peking Opera, there are nearly a dozen percussion instruments being used in the orchestra but the main five are the danpigu (single-head drum), ban (bamboo sticks), daluo (large gong), xiaoluo (small gong) and jingbo (also known as naoba, a set of smallish Chinese crash cymbals) shown in Figure 2.3 and 2.4.

The danpigu is a one-sided drum. The drum is constructed by stretching a skin over a set of wooden wedges bound together in a circle and so hollowed out that only a small part of the


34 Kunqu is a form of Chinese musical drama that originated prior to Peking Opera. It is not only a combination of play, opera, ballet, poetry recital, and musical recital, but also an earlier form of Chinese theatrical performances. It is a first and foremost performing art where people came to see and hear a performance. The plot is usually familiar to the audience, or else made available through a prose summary. The language of Kunqu is an artificial stage language, a modified Mandarin with some features of the local dialect.

skin covers a cavity at the center of the drum. This makes the *danpigu* produce a sharp, dry, and cracking sound that can penetrate through all other instrumental sounds in Peking Opera. The drummer for *danpigu*, who is called *gulou* (the lead drummer, or the Drum Master), also carries the role of conductor of the orchestra. The *gulou* is the bridge between the theatrical and musical elements of Peking Opera. His job is to watch the movements of the actors and actresses on stage, to react to them instantaneously, and in doing so direct the rest of the orchestra to perform the appropriate musical content that seamlessly compliments the activity on the stage. Sin-Yan Shen states in *China: A Journey into Its Musical Art* that “Drum Master uses the drum to direct the orchestra and to provide the rhythm of the singing, and to punctuate the acting. The drummer, as the director of the concert, also uses the *ban*, a time beater, to direct the timing of the whole act including singing, acting, and the accompanying music.” (Shen 2000: 78)

*Daluo* and *xiaoluo* are small gongs that are similar in construction and nature. They sound best when played in the center of the gongs or just slightly off the center. *Daluo* are suspended by a string that goes through two small holes on their rim. The *daluo* beater is a wooden mallet covered by fabric at the tip of the mallet. *Daluo* is the principle percussion instrument used when civilian officials or military officers enter or exit the stage, as well as to represent sudden change of mood or fighting scenes. *Xiaoluo* are smaller and have a higher and brighter sound than *daluo*. Unlike *daluo*, *xiaoluo* have no suspension strings and are pivoted with the left hand fingers at their rim while striking the center of the gong vertically with a thin, flat wooden beater held in the right hand. The beater (or striker) is held with the thumb and the middle finger of the right hand, resembling the manner in which one holds a Chinese calligraphy brush. *Xiaoluo* produce a bright and crisp sound and are used when scholars or ladies enter or exit the stage, as well as when some gentle actions occur. (Pan 1995: 76)
*Jingbo* are a set of Chinese crash cymbals with hemispherical central sections that allow the bo to attenuate quickly. There is a piece of silk or cotton fabric tied to the center hole of each cymbal. The fabric makes it easy to hold and maneuver. The *jingbo's* sound provides a connection between *dalou* and *xiaoluo*. (Pan 1995: 76)

Figure 2.3. *Danpigu, ban,* and various sizes of *jingbo.* Photo taken by Isabelle Streng at the Capital Museum in Beijing in December 2008.
Figure 2.4. *Daluo, xiaoluo, ban,* and beaters for *danpigu* and gongs. Photo taken by Isabelle Streng at the Capital Museum in Beijing in December 2008.

According to Hai-Hsing Yao in *The Use of Martial-Acrobatic Arts in the Training and Performance of Peking Opera, Volume I*\(^{35}\), in addition to the five main percussion instruments, there are at least three secondary categories of percussion instruments that are occasionally used in Peking Opera. These instruments are:

• Yunluo—Chinese fixed-pitched gongs. The yunluo consists of thirty-six or thirty-seven pitched-gongs with different thicknesses but similar surface areas, suspended from a wooden frame. The yunluo is played with a pair of small mallets.

• Datunggu—large double-sided Chinese tom-toms.

• Xiaotunggu—medium double-sided Chinese tom-toms.

The other half of the orchestra is formed by varying combinations of Chinese wind and string instruments. The strings consist of jinghu, jingerhu, yueqin, and sanxian.

The Jinghu and the jingerhu are both two-stringed bowed lutes. Unlike the Western fiddle, the bow hair is permanently fixed between the two strings. One cannot remove the bow from the instrument without taking off one of the string. Additionally, these instruments differ from their western counterparts in that a.) the jinghu and the jingerhu are held vertically on the thigh, b.) the strings are tightened on a vertical post with no fingerboard, and c.) the bow runs between the strings instead of above all strings. The bow then moves horizontally with additional right-hand fingering techniques used to alter the bow tension and for crossing strings. The difference between the jinghu and the jingerhu is that the resonant body of the jinghu is round and made of bamboo while that of the jingerhu is hexagonal and made of redwood. Both instruments are covered on one end with snakeskin. The jinghu is also smaller and is tuned an octave higher than the jingerhu giving it a timbre that is sharper than that of its mellower counterpart.
One interesting fact about the jingerhu is that it was added to the orchestra to balance and compliment the bright and clear sound of Mei Lan-Fang’s female singing voice. The Jingerhu is still frequently excluded from accompanying male roles in traditional Peking Opera performances. (Guy 1996: 35-36). In describing the sound of the jinghu and the jingerhu, Sin-Yan Shen wrote in *Chinese Music and Orchestration: A Primer on Principles and Practice* “Its performance is characterized by subtle contrasts in bowing strength, powerful tension-altering vibrato, and a wide variety of glissandos.” The jinghu is the most important bowed two-stringed instrument for vocal accompaniment in Peking Opera because it plays in unison with the singing. Even the greatest Peking Opera singers must have perfect collaboration with the jinghu player.

The sanxian is a plucked string instrument. However, the sanxian differs from other Chinese plucked string instruments in that it employs the resonance of a skin membrane while the rest of plucked string instruments, for example, *pipa, liuqin, ruan, yangqin, zheng,* and *yueqin* utilize the resonance of a wooden sounding board. There are two types of sanxian: small and large. The small sanxian has a small drum and its tone quality is generated by a string under relatively high tension over a resonator covered with a thin skin, which makes it seem sometimes percussive. By contrast, the larger sanxian has a larger drum and its tone quality is much lower

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36 Mei Lan-Fang is Beijing Opera’s most well known master. He was a superlative singer, actor and dancer of Beijing Opera female role Qing Yi and a towering figure in the Chinese theater. Mei Lan-Fang was born October 22, 1894 in Tai Zhao of China’s Jiangsu province and died on August 7, 1961 in Beijing.


and deeper than that of the small *sanxian*. This is due to the combination of the lower tension on the strings and the larger drum used as the resonator body. (Shen 1991: 32-34)

William P. Malm mentions in his book *MUSIC CULTURES of the PACIFIC, the NEAR EAST, and ASIA*\(^3\) that the *yueqin*—a moon-shaped string instrument—is a Chinese plucked lute similar to the *sanxian*. The *yueqin* has a thin metal plate suspended inside the neck of the larger northern form of the *sanxian*, although this is not found in the smaller southern version. Either style may appear in the opera accompaniment. According to Nancy A Guy in her Ph.D. dissertation, we can see one-, two-, or four-stringed *yueqin* in the Peking Opera orchestra while the two-stringed *yueqin* is the most common. (Guy 1996: 36)

While the strings are the primary melodic instruments accompanying the singing in Peking Opera, the winds are the secondary melodic instruments that are used more during the transitions and bridges between singing passages. Sometimes *dizi* double the passages with the *jinghu* and/or the *jingerhu*.

The *Suona* is a conical double-reed Chinese woodwind instrument with a rosewood body and a metallic horn at the end. In the traditional Peking Opera, the *Suona* is usually used to signal the ending of an opera. It is also often used in battle scenes. (Malm 1996: 191) It has eight basic finger holes and its range covers two octaves plus a whole step. It is recognized by its shrill sound and the frequent use of fluttered-tonguing. Players often must employ circular breathing due to the manner in which the parts are written. (Shen 1991: 152)

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The *Dizi* is a Chinese side-blown flute. The instrument has a reed-membrane covering a hole so the tone produced is a result of the coupling between the air column and the reed-membrane. There are usually six finger holes on the cylindrical body made of bamboo or wood. (Shen 1991: 148)

The *Sheng* is a Chinese mouth organ. It is the first musical instrument in the world utilizing a coupled acoustical system and it has no reed. A large number of bamboo pipes—usually 17, 21, or 36—are mounted on its metallic wind-chest. Each individual pipe has its own finger hole and the pipe sounds when its finger hole is covered. Its characteristic sound is recognized by the frequent use of three-note harmony, fluttered-tonguing, long-tremolos, and short glissandos. (Shen 1991: 152)

*The Singing Styles*

There are two main singing styles in traditional Peking Opera—*xipi* and *erhung*—which are essentially two different types of melodies. Although there are only two main melody groups, due to all the various tempo changes and meters for both styles, the actual number of variations is seemingly beyond quantification.

*Xipi*

The *xipi* was transformed from a local opera melody popular in Shanxi and Gansu provinces. While playing *xipi* melodies, the *jinghu* is tuned to A-E (*la-mi*). The *xipi* melodies are more vivacious, quicker, and higher, so in the traditional Peking Opera programs *xipi* is more suitable and used for happier, more light-hearted, courageous, and more exhilarated moods.
Generally speaking, *xipi* shows more happiness than grief. The meter for *xipi* includes *xipi manban* (4/4), *xipi kuaisanyan* (4/4), *xipi yuanban* (2/4), *xipi erliu* (2/4 or 1/4), *xipi liushui* (1/4), *xipi kuaiban* (1/4), *xipi yaoban* (1/4), *xipi daoban* (free), and *xipi sanban* (free). Figure 2.5 is a chart created by Nancy A. Guy explaining details of meters, tempo, and dramatic association of *xipi* melodies. (Guy 1996: 47)

**Figure 2.5.** Meter, tempo, and dramatic association of *xipi* aria types adapted from Nancy A. Guy’s Ph.D. dissertation.

**Xipi**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aria Type</th>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Dramatic Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xipi Manban</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>40-56</td>
<td>Express that the character is calm and composed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(slow-meter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xipi Kuaisanyan</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>120-220</td>
<td>Often used for anxious narration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(fast-three-eyes-meter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xipi Yuanban</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>70-96</td>
<td>Commonly used for the relatively unemotional narration of events. May express that the character is clear-headed and firm in his/her intentions, or that the character is bold and unrestrained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(primary-meter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xipi Erliu</td>
<td>2/4 or 1/4 (2/8)</td>
<td>70-120</td>
<td>Often sung to give a concise narration of events. May be used to complain about an injustice or to express happiness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(two-six-meter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xipi Liushui</td>
<td>1/4 (2/8)</td>
<td>96-160</td>
<td>Conveys a sense of anticipation or excitement. May be used by two characters to debate or argue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(flowing-water-meter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xipi Kuaiban</td>
<td>1/4 (2/8)</td>
<td>160-208</td>
<td>Shows that a character is resolute and decisive. Often used when two characters are hurriedly questioning one another.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Xipi Yaoban  
(shaking-meter)  
1/4 (2/8) in accompaniment; voice in free meter  
Expresses extremes of emotion. May also communicate that the character appears calm, but is actually very tense.

Xipi Daoban  
(lead-in-meter)  
Free  
Often sung behind the curtain just before the actor appears. Daoban may also be sung when a person recovers from fainting or state of shock.

Xipi Sanban  
(dispersed-meter)  
Free  
For the emotional expression of feelings and narration. Often sung at the end of an extremely tense scene in which the dramatic tension has mounted to a very high degree.

Erhuang

The *erhuang* originates in Huangpi and Huanggang in Hubei province. While playing *erhuang* melodies, the *jinghu* is tuned to G-D (*sol-re*). *Erhuang* melodies are more graceful, sedate, profound, simple, lower, and slower than the *xipi* melodies. It is believed to be more suitable for expressing sad moods and used in more serious circumstances. Generally speaking, *erhuang* shows more grief than happiness. (Pan 1995: 57) The meter for *erhuang* includes *erhuang manban* (4/4), *erhuang yuanban* (2/4), *erhuang yaoban* (1/4), *erhuang baoban* (free), and *erhuang sanban* (free). Figure 2.6 is a chart created by Nancy A. Guy explaining details of meters, tempo, and dramatic association of *erhuang* melodies. (Guy 1996: 46)
Figure 2.6. Meter, tempo, and dramatic association of *erhuang* aria types adapted from Nancy A. Guy’s Ph.D. dissertation.

**Erhuang**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aria Type</th>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Dramatic Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erhuang Manban</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>40-56</td>
<td>Generally used for relatively calm and introspective moods. The character singing often appears to be elegant or solemn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(slow-meter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erhuang Yuanban</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>70-96</td>
<td>Frequently used for the relatively unemotional narration of events. The character appears calm, but may actually be somewhat tense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(primary-meter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erhuang Yaoban</td>
<td>1/4 (2/8) in</td>
<td></td>
<td>Express that the character is attempting to appear calm, but is actually quite anxious. May be used in situations where a character is recounting past events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(shaking-meter)</td>
<td>accompaniment;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>voice in free</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>meter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erhuang Daoban</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
<td>Often expresses intense emotion as well as indignation. Daoban is often used to indicate that the character has returned from afar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(lead-in-meter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erhuang Sanban</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
<td>Often sung at the end of an extremely tense scene in which the dramatic tension has mounted to a very high degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(dispersed-meter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nancy A. Guy also provides some tips for how to distinguish *xipi* from *erhung*.

Perhaps one of the clearest ways for the uninitiated Peking Opera listener to distinguish *xipi* from *erhuang* is to listen for the relationship between the first syllable of each line of text to the striking of the clapper. The clapper’s striking marks the accented beat in each metrical grouping. If an aria type belongs to the *xipi* family, then the first syllable will be sung on an unaccented beat. The first syllable of a line of text sung in *erhuang* will be sung on the accented beat.

Another dissimilarity between the two tune families is in the tuning of the melodic Instruments. In *xipi*, the lower string of the *jinghu* is tuned to the sixth scale degree and the upper string is tuned to the third scale degree above it; in *erhuang*, the *jinghu*’s lower string is tuned to the fifth scale degree and the upper string is tuned to the second scale degree above it. (Guy 1996: 45)
Luogujing and Percussion in Peking Opera Music

_Luogujing_—translated as guide to drum and gong beats, plays a significant role in Peking Opera performances. _Luogujing_ is not merely a simple collection of percussion patterns that accompany the Peking Opera play, it also portrays emotions, accentuates rhythms, supports acting and enhances the dramatic atmosphere. Pan Xiafeng elaborates on the topic in _The Stagecraft of Peking Opera_:

Gong beats with different tempos and rhythms are used to accompany the moving of the characters on stage at different paces and in different moods. Thus, there are such drum and gong beats as _niusi_ (swinging silk), _kuainusi_ (quick), _manchangchui_ (slow), _kuaichangchui, yaoban, changchui, shuidiya_, and _jijifeng_. In sum, there are some 50 to 60 different modes of drum and gong beats. And the same mode of beat may be used differently according to circumstances and may play different supporting roles. Here lies the remarkable ingenuity of the guide to drum and gong beats. (Pan 1995: 76-77)

Characteristics of Music

In his Ph.D. dissertation _The Use of Martial-Acrobatic Arts in the Training and Performance of Peking Opera—Volume 1_, Yao Hai-Hsing identifies characteristics of Peking Opera music that differ from Western opera: (Yao 1990: 49-51)

- Monophonic and heterophonic textures—The singing is dominated by the solo style with occasional use of the chorus in unison. The Peking Opera orchestra does not provide harmony either. The _jinghu_ and/or _jingerhu_ plays the same melody the actor/actress is singing, but with some variations, ornaments, and tempo differences. The rest of the melodic instruments in the orchestra primarily follow the melodic contour of the _jinghu_ and/or _jingerhu_.
• Repetition of music—in the Western operas, the melody used in one opera is rarely (if ever) used again in another opera. Since there are only two main singing styles in Peking Opera, xipi and erhuang, with only a limited number of melodies (perhaps thirty pieces), repetition of the melodies in Peking Opera plays is unavoidable.

• The melodies are permitted to have minor changes—unlike Western operas and most Western music where the musicians sing and play exactly what is written on the page, with only occasionally instructed freedom or improvisation. In Peking Opera, the singer is free to make personal modifications and to add ornaments to create variations. The orchestra varies its melodies as well to accompany the particular singer’s style.

2.7: THE DIALOGUE, THE TEXT, AND THE TYPES OF PEKING OPERA PLAYS

The Dialogue

The dialogue in Peking Opera is just as important as the singing and bears little resemblance to the way people speak on a daily basis. Generally speaking, the dialogue is a musical speech that distinguishes it from singing. Pan Xiafeng mentions that one of the main differences between the singing and the dialogue is that “Singing has the musical accompaniments (changmian) of the two-stringed huqin\(^{39}\) and erhu, four-stringed pipa and other stringed instruments, while dialogue has only a few gong beats at most to accompany it.” (Pan 1995: 61)

\(^{39}\) jinghu.
There are two kinds of dialogues used in traditional Peking Opera—yunbai and jingbai. The vocabulary used in yunbai is similar to the Hubai/Kuangzhou accent and dialect. It has a more educated and academia-like sentence structure and vocabulary. The xiaosheng, loasheng, loadan, qinyi, and hualien characters all use yunbai. In other words, yunbai is more poetic. Jingbai is similar to the standard dialect in Beijing. It is more cheerful, humorous, and vivid, therefore, it is easier to understand than yunbai. Jingbai is more similar to the natural [mandarin] dialect. Huadan, tsaidan, chou, and eunuch characters all use jingbai. (Luo 2006: 31)

The Text

Before the twentieth century, Peking Opera texts were mostly created by the actors. However, most stories used then in Peking Opera were borrowed from the ones in kunqu or adapted from legends or historical novels that were not written down. Obviously, these oral traditions were not of very high literary quality. In the early days of the Republic (c. 1911), Peking Opera began to use literati to write libretti for performances for their favorite actors. This practice would later become the main way of training writers, and major opera troupes often employed their own permanent librettists. (Guy 1996: 30)

According to Yun Jin-Feng in Introduction on Traditional Chinese Music, regardless which singing style is being used—xipi or erhuang—the Chinese opera lyrics are sung in sets of sentences of from seven to ten words with the last word of each sentence rhyming. Each two sentences express an idea and a group of four to ten sentences constructs a paragraph. Each

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sentence—seven or ten words—is broken down into three groups respectively: two-two-three for seven-word-sentences and three-three-four for ten-word-sentences.

**Types of Peking Opera Plays**

Peking Opera stories are very educational. The sources of the stories include the following: (Luo 2006: 75-93)

- **Historical plays**—stories of the historical plays all take place during the transition from one dynasty to the next, civil wars, invasion from the foreign country, etc.

- **Political plays**—most of the political plays reflect the struggling relationship between the government and its people.

- **Moral and ethnic plays**—moral and ethnic structures and boundaries are very important in Chinese culture and this is reflected in Peking Opera.

- **Romantic plays**—in ancient Chinese culture, the marriage of two people is arranged and agreed upon from birth by both parties’ parents, sometimes even pre-birth. There are many stories of lovebirds rebelling against this tradition while trying to pursue their own happiness. Some are about the love stories of the emperors. Another interesting group of romantic stories involve females tricking males into marrying them.

- **Psychological plays**—these are plays about what happens when one is in a dream-state, or while drunk, or loosing his or her sanity, or in a mind-playing game, like a war strategy.
CHAPTER III. MU KUEI-YIN TAKES COMMAND

3.1: THE STORY OF MU KUEI-YIN

According to Ching-Fa Chang in *A Study on the Development and Spreading of the Story of the Generals of the Yang Family*[^41], the story of the Yang family and Mu Kuei-Yin can be found in Chinese history, legends, folklore, novels, Peking Opera plays, TV shows, and movies. However, most historians still believe that even though the Yang family did exist, the personage of Mu Kuei-Yin is either just a fictional character or a real person in the Yang family whose events and characters have been greatly fictionalized. In Lin Wen’s article *A Short Study on the Reason and Influence of the Appearance of the Female Images in “The Stories of the Yang Family”*,[^42][^43] he states that although the stories of the Yang family have been written since the Song dynasty, there are no stories of either Mu Kuei-Yin (or any female characters from the Yang family) written until after the mid-Ming dynasty.[^44]


[^44]: The Yang family lived and fought the wars during the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127). After the Northern Song dynasty, it came the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279), the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368), then the Ming dynasty (1368-1644).
The most commonly told story of Mu Keui-Yin is that she is the only daughter of a rebel Song general who retired from court and settled in the mountains. Mu Keui-Yin’s father was a great general who fought for the emperor but fell into disfavor and subsequently fled to the mountains with his army to avoid persecution. From her childhood, Mu Kuei-Yin’s father trained her in the skills of the martial arts and military strategies that he had learned in childhood. And as legend tells it, this is why Mu Kuei-Yin was among the most gifted warriors on the field of battle. Mu Keui-Yin’s first encounter with the Yang family occurred when general Yang Yan-Zhao sent his sixth son Yang Zong-Bao to find Mu Keui-Yin with the intent of obtaining the secret countermeasure for quashing the *Tianmenzhen* array.\(^{45}\) When Yang Zong-Bao arrived at the camp, Mu Kuei-Yin immediately fell in love with him. She captured him and tricked him into marrying her the next day. Now married, the couple returned to the Song army base, expecting General Yang to be furious and to banish them. However, what they did not know was that General Yang had already intended to recruit Mu Kuei-Yin for his army. Now a member of the Yang family, Mu Keui-Yin fought on the battlefield alongside the Song for decades, until such time as the Yang family retired from active service. This was propagated by the Emperor’s mistrust of the family’s loyalty brought on by the actions of some mischievous governors. The Yang family remained in retirement for twenty years until the emperor enlisted Mu Keui-Yin to

\(^{45}\) The Xiongnus enlisted Lu Zhong, who was a Hang Chinese defector to strategize the military actions for them. Lu Zhong was famous for his knowledge of the Song army and his strategies of deploying all kinds of battle arrays. He was specially known for his undefeated *Tianmenzhen* (translated Heavenly Gate Array). The Xiongnus challenged the Song army to break the *Tianmenzhen* in one hundred days or the Great Liao army would overrun the entire land of the Song dynasty. The Song army tried everything they could, but failed each time. As the deadline neared, the Song army began to worry. The Chief of Staff of the Song army recommended to general Yang Yan-Zhao, who was the Commander-in-Chief at the time, that he contact a young woman named Mu Kuei-Yin. She was the only daughter of the rebel general Mu, who was a close friend of Lu Zhong. General Mu was familiar with the strategies Lu Zhong used and he had passed them along to his daughter before death. They believed that Mu Kuei-Yin would know how to break the *Tianmenzhen*. With the hope of building an alliance, General Yang Yan-Zhao sent his son Yang Zhong-Bao to see Mu Kuei-Yin for the information on how to break the array. (Yuan 2006: 139)
take command of his army and lead them into battle once more against the Xiongnu. The story of *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command* is based on this particular series of events.

### 3.2: THE PLOT

The following plot summary is taken from a DVD performance of *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command* by Sheng-Su Li⁴⁶, Ching-Feng Du⁴⁷, and Hai-Ming Wei⁴⁸.

**The Background**

Haiwang Yuan’s article *Women Generals of the Yang Family and Commander-In-Chief Mu Guiying*⁴⁹ provides background as to how Mu Kuei-Yin and the Yang family fought in battles to protect their country:

The Song dynasty had waged a protracted war against Great Liao, a nomadic tribal state in North China. People of Great Liao were of Hun origin, known to the Han Chinese as Xiongnu. Bent on conquering the Song dynasty, the Xiongnu army, mostly cavalry, started one war after another. Facing Great Liao’s invasion, the Song Court split into two factions; one wanted to fight and the other was eager to surrender, with the emperor wavering in between.

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⁴⁷ 穆桂英掛帥, DVD, 杜近芳主演. 揚子江音像有限公司. 1998年.


⁴⁸ 中國戲曲精華一：穆桂英掛帥, DVD, 魏海敏主演. 中華電視股份有限公司. 2005年.


⁴⁹ Haiwang Yuan, *The Magic Lotus Lantern and Other Tales from the Han Chinese* (Westport: Libraries Unlimited, 2006), 139.
The Roles (listed in the order of their appearance in Mu Kuei-Yin Take Command)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emperor Song (宋王)</td>
<td>The emperor at the time. A loasheng.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ko Zhun (寇准)</td>
<td>A governor who supports the Yang family. A loasheng.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang Chang (王強)</td>
<td>Secretary of defense, who is evil and selfish. He dislikes the Yang family tries to obtain more power for his own family. A loasheng.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yu Tai Chun (余太君)</td>
<td>The grandmother of Mu Kuei-Yin’s husband. Like the rest of Yang family, Yu has fought on the battlefields for decades. A loadan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yang Wen-Kwang (楊文廣)</td>
<td>Son of Mu Keui-Yin. A xiaosheng.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mu Kuei-Yin (穆桂英)</td>
<td>One of the most important female generals in Chinese history. A huadan and wudan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Act One**

**Scene one**

Governor Ko Zhun hurries through the town with a few of his servants with the hope of an audience with the emperor. Meanwhile, the emperor is having a feast with his mistresses and his eunuchs. Ko Zhun bring the news of Xiongnus invading the Hans again. The emperor is furious that the secretary of defense, Wang Chang did not report this incident. The emperor calls
for Wang Chang who in turn claims that he was unaware of the situation because his subordinates had not reported it to him. He believes that even if such an event is transpiring, it is probably just a ploy of the Xiongnus to extort more money from the Hans. The emperor has been giving the Xiongnus gold, silk, tea, and other commodities for years in hopes of maintaining peace between the Hans and the Xiongnus. If the government does not curtail this practice, they will soon be facing bankruptcy. Seeing the shortcomings of the current policy and the emperor’s worry and fear, Ko Zhun suggests they should fight back this time and end this at once. Although the emperor agrees with Ko Zhun, he cannot think of anyone who is capable of taking command of his army and leading them into battle against the Xiongnus. Ko Zhun mentions the Yang family, but Wang Chang disagrees with him and suggests the Yang family cannot be trusted because they have not been in the emperor’s service for over twenty years. In fact, Wang Chang wishes to recommend his own son, Wang Lun, for the position. Both the emperor and Ko Zhun believe that even though Wang Lun is a suitable candidate for the commission, due to the huge responsibilities of the position, they should hold a national martial arts competition to determine the ultimate commander.

Scene two

At the Yang resident, Yang Zhong-Bao hurries in to tell them the news of Xiongnus invading the Hans again. Yu Tai Chun is listening to Yang Jin-Hua and Yang Wen-Kwang brag about their most recent hunting trip. Even though he has been retired from the battlefield for twenty years, upon hearing the news Yu Tai Chun voices concern over who might take command
of the Song army and lead them into battle. With the hope of obtaining more details on the subject, Yu Tai Chun sends Jin-Hua and Wen-Kwang to Beijing to meet with the emperor.

Scene three

Jin-Hua and Wen-Kwang arrive in Beijing and are taunted by the guards of the Wang resident. The guards challenge them to fight their Master, Wang Lun, at the national martial arts competition for the title of commander-in-chief. Jin-Hua and Wen-Kwang enter the competition and not only defeat Wang Lun, but Wen-Kwang kills him during the fight. When the emperor and Ko Zhun learn that Jin-Hua and Wen-Kwang are from the Yang family, they are delighted. However, the emperor is concerned that because Jin-Hua and Wen-Kwang are quite young, the soldiers in the Song army might be resistant to obeying their orders. Ko Zhun then suggests that the emperor appoint their mother Mu Kuei-Yin to take command.

Act Two

Scene one

Jin-Hua and Wen-Kwang return from Beijing and share the news of their trip with Mu Kuei-Yin, who is immediately furious with the outcome and orders the servants to punish Wen-Kwang. Yu Tai Chun, hearing the commotion, enters the room and tries to intervene in Mu Kuei-Yin’s disciplinary measures. Mu Kuei-Yin tells her of Jin-Hua and Wen-Kwang’s trip to Beijing and of her appointment as commander-in-chief with which they have returned. Yu Tai Chung is filled with emotions, both good and bad. She has been disappointed in the emperor’s mistrust of
people and his neglect of the Yang family for the past twenty years. Nevertheless, ultimately Yu Tai Chung believes Mu Kuei-Yin and the Yang family should accept command of the army and fight this war for the country, not for their family or the emperor. She then orders Jin-Hua and Wen-Kwang to prepare their mother to accept the commission. While Jin-Hua and Wen-Kwang are delighted with Yu Tai Chung’s proclamation, Mu Kuei-Yin is reluctant to accept it. Mu Kuei-Yin explains that she resents the emperor and that he is no longer worthy of their service. Although Yu Tai Chung is sympathetic to Mu Kuei Yin’s feelings, she tries to convince her that they should fight this war for the people of the country, not for the emperor or the Yang family. Seeing that Mu Kuei-Yin is still reluctant to take the command, Yu Tai Chung threatens to command the army herself. Yu Tai Chung is already over ninety years old. Allowing her to take command would be in opposition with Mu Kuei-Yin’s moral responsibility. Mu Kuei-Yin then agrees to accept the appointment.

Scene two

Mu Kuei-Yin appears at the military based dressed as a commander-in-chief. We learn that Wen-Kwang has accidentally broken a rule of the code of conduct. Even though he is Mu Kuei-Yin’s son, she punishes him severely to demonstrate to those in her charge that she will show no favoritism, even to her own children. Her actions draw immediate approval and respect from the troops. Mu Kuei-Yin then leads her army to fight the Xiongnus.
3.3: THE MUSIC

According to Hai-Ming Wei in *Peking Opera Actress: Hai-Ming Wei’s self portrait* ⁵⁰, an interesting fact about *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command* is that even though Mu Kuei-Yin is the main character of this play, she only appears on stage three times. The first time is as a mother at home. She does not sing in this appearance, only performing *yunbai*, the poetic dialog associated with Peking Opera. The second time Mu Kuei-Yin takes the stage, she sings in the *xipi manban* (4/4 meter) and *xipi erliu* (2/4 meter) styles, expressing her struggles with whether or not she should accept command of the army. In her final appearance, she is the commander-in-chief at the military base and about to enter the battlefield.

Other singing styles used in *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command* include *xipi yuanban, xipi sanban, xipi liushui*, and *nanbonzi*. ⁵¹

3.4: PASSAGES ADAPTED BY CHIEN-HUI HUNG IN *MU KUEI-YIN IN PERCUSSION*

見帥印 又勾啓 多少前情

Seeing the commander-in-chief seal brings back a lot of memories.

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The Yang Family puts the safety of the country before the interests of their own family.

Some of the government officials suggest the emperor fight back.

Once again they deliver the seal to the Yang family.

The Song emperor trusts and favors the wrong people in his current court.

I, Mu Kuei-Yin have given up on the emperor after all these years.

Is it real that I do not have the loyalty and the heart to fight for our country anymore?

Suddenly, I hear the drums and the horns on the battlefield.

It reminds me of that patriotic spirit I had before.
I recall the memory of the year that I rode my horse, fought on the battlefield, and had the enemy’s blood splattered on my robe.

As long as I live I will do anything I can to fulfill my duty and protect every inch of our country.

The Xiongnus are not a problem. I can fight off millions of their soldiers with my sword.

Who is going to take the command if I do not take it? Who is going to lead the army if I do not do so?
CHAPTER IV. MU KUEI-YIN IN PERCUSSION

The following narrative presents information obtained through analyzing the score for *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*, and the DVD of its premier performance, both provided by the composer. Note that due to the nature of this piece as a cross-cultural production, the actual performance has immensely more freedom than what is presented in the score. Although Miss Hung has assured the author that this is the final version of the work, many of the changes made at the premier performance by the Peking Opera players and the Ju Percussion Group are not represented in the score.

4.1: INSTRUMENTATION

*Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* is written for six percussionists, a Peking Opera actor and a Peking Opera actress. The instrumentation for the piece is as follows:

- Percussion one: xylophone, glockenspiel, rain stick, maracas, triangle, *naoba*
- Percussion two: vibraphone, cabasa, flexatone
- Percussion three: marimba, guiro
- Percussion four: marimba, bamboo wind chimes, slapsticks, *naoba*
- Percussion five: timpani, crystal glass, *naoba*, agogo bells, *daluo*, beer bottle, wood blocks, cymbal, *xiaoluo*
- Percussion six: water gong, Japanese wooden slats, Chinese tom-toms, *qing*\(^{52}\). Chinese bass drum (Chinese Taiko), cymbal

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\(^{52}\) *Qing* is an ancient Chinese chime that is traditionally made of stone. Contemporary *qing* are often made of metal.
4.2: THE FORM

The theatrical structure of *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* is divided into three parts.

**Part One**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before measure 1</td>
<td>Lights off. Musicians take the stage and wander around before they arrive at their setup. Mu Kuei-Yin hums an improvised passage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures 1-21</td>
<td>Lights still off, the vibraphone begins to play after Mu Kuei-Yin finishes humming. Lights fade in while Mu Kuei-Yin walks on stage. Mu Kuei-Yin sings the following passages mm. 10-21: 見帥印 又勾啓 多少前情 Seeing the commander-in-chief seal brings back a lot of memories. 楊家將 捨身忘 家把社稷定 The Yang Family puts the safety of the country before the interests of their own family. Measures 1-7: in 4/4, ( J = 42 ), but very free. Measures 8-21: in 5/4, ( J = 72 ), also free.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures 22-36</td>
<td>Mu Kuei-Yin sings <em>yunbai</em> measures 22-28: 慶昇平 朝堂內 群小並進 Some of the government officials suggest the emperor fight back. 卻又把 元帥印 送到楊門 Once again they deliver the seal to the Yang family. 宋王爺 平日裡 蕭信奸臣 The Song emperor trusts and favors the wrong people in his current court. Mu Kuei-Yin sings the following passage measures 29-35: 桂英我 多年來 早已寒心 I, Mu Kuei-Yin have given up on the emperor after all these years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures 36-64</td>
<td>No singing. Only acting. Uses five <em>luogujings</em>: measures 36-44 <em>jiuzhuiban</em> (九錘半), measures 45-50 <em>yinluo</em> (陰鑼), measures 50-55 <em>chuanzi</em> (串子), measures 56-60 <em>shouchang</em> (攫場), and measures 60-64 <em>matui</em> (馬腿). ( J = 144 ), meters in 2/4 and 3/4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measures 65-79  
Mu Kuei-Yin sings the following passage in very free tempo:  

為什麼我 竟無有 為國為民一片忠心  
Is it real that I do not have the loyalty and the heart to fight for our country anymore?

Measures 80-85  

Measures 86-113  
Mu Kuei-Yin sings the following passages in faster tempo (\( \dot{J} = 160 \)) and in time:  

猛聽得 金鼓響 畫角聲振  
Suddenly, I hear the drums and the horns on the battlefield.  

喚起我 破天門 壯志凌雲  
It reminds me of that patriotic spirit I had before.  

想當年 桃花馬上 威風凛凜 敵血飛濺石榴裙  
I recall the memory of the year that I rode my horse, fought on the battlefield, and had the enemy’s blood splattered on my robe.  

有生之日 責當盡 寸土 能夠 屬於他人  
As long as I live I will do anything I can to fulfill my duty and protect every inch of our country.  

番王 小丑 何足論 我一劍 能擋 百萬兵  
The Xiongnus are not a problem. I can fight off millions of the their soldiers with my sword.

Mu Kuei-Yin sings yunbai:  

我不掛帥 誰掛帥  
Who is going to take the command if I do not take it?  

我不領兵 誰領兵  
Who is going to lead the army if I do not do so?

Mu Kuei-Yin leaves stage.

---

**Part Two**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Measures 114-123 | Introduction of part two and transition to a military scene.  
In 4/4 and 5/4. \( \dot{J} = 80 \). |
| Measures 124-134 | \( \dot{J} = 96 \). Variation of measures 114-123. The actor (who plays Yang Wen-Kwang) takes the stage. |
Yang Wen-Kwang shouts the following passages:

爭霸業 只為 江山多嬌
All these wars are just for protecting our beautiful country.

四海 衝開 柏陣圖
The attacks come from all directions.

The musicians shout back the same passages, imitating soldiers who are echoing the captain’s command.

Yang Wen-Kwang sings the following passages in time:

漫天殺氣 陣雲高 含恨番奴犯攪 無端犯境
The air is filled with thoughts of killing. The cavalry creates a black blizzard on the battlefield.

寇別護秦王命 掃除強盜
The Xiongnus might as well give up their dream of conquering the Song because I will not let it happen.

馬到處 衝開陣腳 捲一出 命難逃
Wherever I ride there will be a fight and the enemy will die under my sword.


Exact repetition of material presented in measures 162-169.

Exact repetition of material presented in measures 170-190.

Exact repetition of material presented in measures 114-123.

Yang Wen-Kwang leaves the stage.

Part Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures 251-274</td>
<td>Both Peking Opera actor and actress are off stage. The musicians perform transitional material to set a new emotional tone for the upcoming scene. In 4/4. J = 66, but very free.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although Miss Hung intended that this piece be more a musical creation than a theatrical one, it is apparent that the theatrical element is still pervasive, even from the beginning of the piece. That said, theatrical instructions (such as lighting, acting, choreography, and staging) are not included in the score, but rather left to the discretion of the performing ensemble and its director.

The performance begins with lights off. The musicians enter the stage one by one, wandering around before they arrive at their setup. In measures 1-7, there is a humming passage for the Peking Opera actress (Mu Kuei-Yin) written in the score. However, in the premier performance by the Ju Percussion Group, this written material was replaced with an improvised passage hummed by Mu Kuei-Yin, offstage, while the lights are still off and the musicians are entering the stage. Also not present in the original score (but realized at the premier performance) is the opening vibraphone passage being echoed by the marimba a few beats later in canonic fashion. Example 4.1 shows measures 1-7 with edits from the premier performance.
Measure 8 presents the first passage taken from *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*. Measure 8 to measure 21 are in 5/4 with a marked tempo of $J = 72$. However, in the performance, this passage was played very freely for the first few measures. At measure 10 the vibraphone cues Mu Kuei-Yin to begin singing her passages:

見帥印 又勾啓 多少前情
Seeing the commander-in-chief seal brings back a lot of memories.

楊家將 捨身忘 家把社稷定
The Yang Family puts the safety of the country before the interests of their own family.

These passages are taken from *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command* and the singing style and tempo are *xipi liushui*. As mentioned in chapter two, *xipi liushui* is in 1/4 with a tempo range of $J = 96-160$. Therefore, these passages are sung slower and more freely in *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* than in a more traditional Peking Opera performance of *Mu Kuei-Yin Take Command*. As Mu Kuei-Yin starts singing, she enters the stage and the lights fade in. The pervasive mode used for this section is A-mixolydian. Example 4.2 shows the melodic material to be sung by the actress in measures 10-35. It is followed by the Chinese text and its translation.
Example 4.2. Melody of the passages in measures 10-35

Seeing the commander-in-chief seal brings back a lot of memories.

The Yang Family puts the safety of the country before the interests of their own family.

Some of the government officials suggest the emperor fight back.

Once again they deliver the seal to the Yang family.

I, Mu Kuei-Yin have given up on the emperor after all these years.
Although the composer has shown great attention to detail in presenting the material from *Mu Keui-Yin Takes Command* in this very different context, one passage of material was deleted from this scene in her adaptation. The deleted material is the following. It would normally appear between measures 21 and 22.

凱歌還人 受恩寵 我添新塋

The emperor showed us favor whenever I returned from the battle and brought back triumph, but I also buried more family members everytime we returned.

Additionally, the material presented in measures 22 to 28 has been changed to *yunbai*, instead of the normal singing that would occur in *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*.

The accompaniment for these passages is a combination of the traditional elements of Peking Opera music and Miss Hung’s own compositional techniques, a style that shows the obvious influences of her Western music education. In general, there are a few tenets used in her accompaniment writing:

1. The xylophone generally plays in unison with the vocal line.
2. The vibraphone plays more of a conductor role. Almost all vibraphone passages are either cues or fills between the vocal passages.
3. The two marimba parts construct one or two chords within an octave. These chords are constructed based on perfect 4\textsuperscript{th}s or perfect 5\textsuperscript{th}s. For example, A-D-E-A.
4. Percussion five and six play crystal glass on the timpani and water gong from measure 8 to measure 21. They switch to Japanese wooden slats, *naoba*, and Chinese tom-toms during measures 22-28, when Mu Kuei-Yin sings the passages in *yunbai*.
5. During the *yunbai* passages, the accompaniment parts are busier.
6. *Yunbai* is notated rhythmically to suggest the pace at which the text is to be presented.

Measures 37 to 64 are a selection of various *luogujin*; including *jiuzhuiban* (九鍾半), *yinluo* (陰阒), *chuanzi* (串子), *shouchang* (捲場), and *matui* (馬腿). I have identified the diluted *luogujing* in the following examples. Example 4.3 is the original *jiuzhuiban* and Example 4.4 is the *jiuzhuiban* in *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*.

**Example 4.3. Jiuzhuiban**

![Musical notation](image1)

**Example 4.4. Measures 36-42 with Jiuzhuiban continuing into chuanzi**

![Musical notation](image2)
Example 4.5 shows the original *yinluo* and Example 4.6 shows the *yinluo* in *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*.

**Example 4.5. *Yinluo***

Example 4.6. Measures 43-49 with *yinluo*

Example 4.7 shows the original *chuanzi*, Example 4.8 shows the original *shouchang*, and Example 4.9 shows the original *matui*. Example 4.10 shows these three *luogujing* as they appear in *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*. 
Example 4.7. *Chuanzi*

```
\begin{music}
\textbf{Chuanzi}
\end{music}
```

Example 4.8. *Shouchang*

```
\begin{music}
\textbf{Shouchang}
\end{music}
```

Example 4.9. *Matui*

```
\begin{music}
\textbf{Matui}
\end{music}
```
Example 4.10. Measures 50-63 with chuanzi, shouchang, and matui

There is no singing from measure 36 to measure 64. The character of Mu Kuei-Yin acts during this time employing many standard movements and gestures associated with *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*. The purpose of the music from measures 36-64 is to mimic the *luoguijing* typically used with these movements. Hence, even the pitched instruments used here are presented in a mainly percussive fashion.

From measures 65-79, Mu Kuei-Yin sings the following passage:

難道我 竟無有 為國為民一片忠心

Is it real that I do not have the loyalty and the heart to fight for our country anymore?
The melody of this passage is shown in Example 4.11.

Example 4.11. Melody of the passage in measures 67-78

In *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command* this passage is sung in *xipi sanban* in a very slow tempo. Here, the passage is sung in a slow tempo, but freely. In the premier performance, the actress added in an un-notated glissando right before the passage begins. Another un-notated change in the performance is a tempo change that occurs between measures 64 and 65. There is no tempo marking indicating a tempo change at measure 65, however, during the performance, measure 65 was played with a metric modulation of \( \frac{4}{4} \). The mode for the musical content of this passage is G-pentatonic. The xylophone, vibraphone, and two marimbas play musical motifs presented in canonic fashion. Example 4.12 shows the canon effect from measure 64 to measure 70.
Example 4.12. Canon effect in measures 64-70

Measures 80 to 83 are a four-bar interlude that helps transition into the new tempo of $\text{♩}=160$ at measure 84. This sets up the new pace for the next set of the passages from measure 86 to measure 110.

Suddenly, I hear the drums and the horns on the battlefield.

It reminds me of that patriotic spirit I had before.

I recall the memory of the year that I rode my horse, fought on the battlefield, and had the enemy’s blood splattered on my robe.

As long as I live I will do anything I can to fulfill my duty and protect every inch of our country.

The Xiongnus are not a problem. I can fight off millions of their soldiers with my sword.

Who is going to take the command if I do not take it?
我不領兵 誰領兵

Who is going to lead the army if I do not do so?

These passages are sung in three different tempos and styles. Measures 86 to 97 are sung in *xipi liushui*, more or less in time, and is twice as fast as the previous passage in measures 67-78. Measures 100 to 103 are sung in a very free, cadenza-like style and measures 105 to 110 are set in *yunbai*, which differs from how it is sung in *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*. Example 4.13 shows the melody of these passages in measures 86-110.

**Example 4.13. Melody of passages in measures 86-110**

The mode of this section is G-pentatonic with a raised seventh scale degree. The accompaniment in measures 86-98 is divided into four groups:

- Xylophone plays a scalar pattern that is similar to the motif played in marimba two in measures 65-77.
- Vibraphone plays in octaves and in unison with the vocal line.
• The two Marimba parts play 8th note rhythms using chords that are built on the intervals of Perfect 4ths.

• Percussion five and six play 8th notes on *daluo*, *naoba*, and Chinese Taiko.

While Mu Kuei-Yin sings the last passage in *yunbai*, the accompaniment reverts to the style used in measures 65-79 before transitioning into part two of the piece. Mu Kuei-Yin exits the stage after completing the last passage.

### 4.4: PART TWO—MEASURES 114-250

Part two begins at measure 114 with a ten-bar theme that sets up the first scene of the second part of the piece. While part one scenes are set at Mu Kuei-Yin’s home, part two scenes are set at a military base. The textual passages in part two of *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* are taken from generic material named *<五馬江兒水混牌子>* (*Five Horses Passing River* mixed tune53). The material is originally from Kunqu (the oldest form of Chinese Opera) and depict large-scale army deployments and withdraws.54 According to the composer55, although *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* takes its inspiration from *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*, she wished to maintain some originality in the use of her own music in the work and avoid solely adapting passages from *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command*. In part two of *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* the

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53 The passages performed with percussion and *suona* are called ‘mixed tune’; the passages performed with only *suona* are called ‘clear tune’; and the passages performed with only percussion are called ‘dry tune.’

54 胡健純, 香港中文大學音樂系戲曲資料中心, “嵩劇鑼鼓、曲牌簡介及對京劇音樂的影響”.
Lian-Jun Geng, Hong Kong Chinese University—School of music, Chinese Opera Documentation Center, “Introduction and the Influence of Kunqu Percussion and Tunes in Peking Opera.”

55 Chien-Hui Hung, e-mail message to author, October 15, 2012.
composer is attempting to recreate the theatrical imagery of the momentum of battle of General Mu Kuei-Yin and her army. To that end, Miss Hung, in consultation with the Peking Opera players, decided that the most suitable textual material to represent this imagery was <五馬江兒水混牌子> (Five Horses Passing River mixed tune).

The Peking Opera actor who portraits Yang Wen-Kwang enters the stage at measure 124. Measures 124-134 is developmental material based on the theme presented in measures 114-123. Measures 135-161 is shouting only. The compositional style from measure 114 to measure 161 is that of a ‘call and response’ between the timpani and the rest of the players—xylophone, vibraphone, marimba one, marimba two, and Chinese Taiko. This ‘call and response’ relationship later transforms into the actor shouting the passages and the musicians responding in similar fashion from measure 135 to measure 161. The textual passages used for measures 135-161 are the following:

爭霸業只為江山多嬌
All these wars are just for protecting our beautiful country.

四海衝開柏陣圍
The attacks come from all directions.

The mode used in measures 114-161 is D-Phrygian. The melodies are based on octaves with two perfect 4\(^{\text{th}}\)s inserted to thicken the sound, for example, D-G-A-D. In addition, the xylophone, vibraphone, and marimba one play the same pitch content in different registers, while marimba two plays the ‘mirror image’ of the chords played by the other three melodic instruments. Example 4.14 shows the theme in measures 114-123.
Example 4.14. Measures 114-123, Theme that begins Part Two

Example 4.15 shows the ‘mirror image’ effect between the melodic instruments and the ‘call and response’ relationship between timpani and the rest of the musicians.
Example 4.15. Measures 127-133, the ‘mirror image’ effect and ‘call and response’

Example 4.16 shows the ‘call and response’ relationship in the form of shouting between the actor and the musicians.

Beginning in measure 162 the meter changes to 2/4 with a tempo marking of $j = 126-132$.

The mode used from measures 162 to 240 is C-Pentatonic. The pattern of Chinese Tom-toms suggests it is a form of variation from *chuanzi*. Yang Wen-Kwang sings the passages from measures 170 to 189. This is then repeated in measures 220 to 239. The passages include the following:

漫天殺氣 陣雲高 合恨番奴犯捲 無端犯境

The air is filled with thoughts of killing. The cavalry creates a black blizzard on the battlefield.

寇別剿秦王命 掃除強盜

The Xiongnus might as well give up their dream of conquering the Song because I will not let it happen.

馬到處 衝開陣腳 搶一出 命難逃

Wherever I ride there will be a fight and the enemy will die under my sword.

The accompaniment is orchestrated as follows:

- Vibraphone plays unison lines with the voice.
• Xylophone and marimba two act as a pair, with marimba two doubling the xylophone part and adding a perfect 4th beneath it.

• Marimba one plays 8th note octave-chords constructed with two perfect 4ths in between the octaves.

• Percussion five and six are paired playing 8th-notes throughout.

It is notated in the score that the actor is to start singing on beat two of measure 169, however, in the performance, the actor did not start singing until measure 170. These passages are sung in tempo.

Example 4.17 shows the pattern of chuanzi and the structure of the accompaniment parts in measures 162-175.

Example 4.17. Measures 162-175, variation of chuanzi and the relationship between the accompaniment parts
Example 4.17. Continued

Example 4.18 shows the melody of the passages sung in measures 170-189 and 220-239.

Example 4.18. Melody of the passages in measures 170-189

Measures 190 to 212 serve as a bridge before the repetition of the passages. There is no melodic instrument in measures 190 to 212. The instruments used here are triangle, flexatone, guiro, slapsticks, woodblocks, and Chinese Tom-toms. The pattern used here is the extended variation on chuanzi. During this time the actor does not sing but does a series of movements and gestures on stage. Measures 212 to 240 are exact duplication of the material presented in measures 162 to 190. The ending of part two is the same initial material presented at the beginning of part two in measures 114 to 123. Yang Wen-Kwang exits the stage at measure 248.

Example 4.19 is an excerpt of measures 190 to 203 showing the bridge with the extended variation on chuanzi.
4.5: PART THREE—MEASURES 251-340 (END)

Part three of *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* begins with music that presents an air of mystery and tension. As was the case at the beginning of parts one and two, the musicians set the mood for the first scene of part three—The Battlefield—from measure 251 to measure 274. Part three is divided into three sections:

- Measures 251 to 274, the ‘negotiation between the two commanders-in-chief’, musicians set up the scene.
• Measures 275 to 300, ‘getting ready for the battle’, musicians continue to build the
tension and the Peking Opera actress and actor (Mu Kuei-Yin and Yang Wen-Kwang)
enter the stage and pose to fight.
• Measures 301 to 340 (end), ‘the battle between the Song army and the Xiongnus’, Mu
Kuei-Yin and Yang Wen-Kwang perform a fighting scene.

There is no singing in part three, only some shouting by the musicians in measures 291 to 300
(shout ‘to kill’). The music from measure 251 to measure 300 is story telling-like in its
presentation. From measure 251 to measure 274 the music is rather a type of communication
between the Chinese Taiko (or sometimes marimba two) and the timpani that is meant to
represent a dialog between Mu Kuei-Yin and the head of the Xiongnus’ army. As the negotiation
goes bad between them, the music gets louder, faster, and more intense. Example 4.20 is an
example of this section.

**Example 4.20. Measures 260-273, the ‘negotiation’ and the build-up of the tension**
The second section of part three—measures 275 to 300—portrays moments before the battle. The actor and the actress enter the stage from either side beginning at measure 275. Although measures 275 to 282 are notated very strictly in rhythm between Chinese Taiko and timpani, it is performed rather freely with the construct of going from slow to fast, in a sort of notated accelerando. Chinese Taiko and timpani represent the actor and the actress in this section. The actor and the actress move accordingly to the tempo set by the Chinese Taiko and timpani. After both the actor and the actress arrive at center stage, the players of Percussion One, Two, Three, and Four start shouting 軍 (kill) from measure 291 to measure 300, mimicking the soldiers shouting before battles. Example 4.21 shows how the Chinese Taiko and timpani are used to cue the pace of the actor and actress as they take the stage.
Example 4.21. Measures 275-281, cues for the actor and the actress from Chinese Taiko and timpani

Example 4.22 shows the shouting mimicking the soldiers on the battlefield in measures 295 to 300.

Example 4.22. Measures 295-300, musicians shouting 'kill'
Measures 301 to 340 are the third and final section of part three. There is no singing in this section; only acting that depicts fighting on the battlefield. The music in this section is constructed into three groups:

1. Xylophone and vibraphone playing unison figures in different registers throughout.
2. Marimba one and marimba two alternate between playing chordal figures and running 16\textsuperscript{th}-notes throughout. The chords are built either with two perfect 4\textsuperscript{th} s within an octave or simply perfect 5\textsuperscript{th} s.
3. Percussion five and six play timpani, Chinese Tom-toms, and Chinese Taiko. These two players set the tempo for the section, with one playing 8\textsuperscript{th}-notes and the other playing 16\textsuperscript{th}-note throughout.

The mode used for measures 301 to 322 is F-Aeolian and then changes to C-Aeolian in measure 323. The harmonic center later changes back to F-Aeolian on beat four of measure 334 and continues to the end. From measure 337 to measure 340 Percussion One, Two, Three, and Four play in rhythmic and melodic unison, but in different registers. There are two errors in the scores in this section. The first is in Percussion Five. The instrumentation is notated as \textit{xiaoluo} and \textit{daluo}. In the premier performance however, this is replaced with timpani. The other error is in measure 339. Percussion Five is notated as \textit{xiaoluo} playing 16\textsuperscript{th}-notes throughout until the end. During the premiere performance it was replaced with a timpani roll throughout the bar. Then only using the Chinese Taiko to cue the actor and the actress for the ending pose. Example 4.23 shows the grouping of the players in measures 301 to 340.
Example 4.23. Measures 302-307, the three groupings in the ensemble

Example 4.24 shows the ending of the piece.

Example 4.24. Measures 332-340, cue for ending pose
An additional un-notated theatrical element is omitted in that after the piece has ended, the lights are to go off and the musicians and the actor are to slowly exit the stage, leaving Mu Kuei-Yin as the sole person remaining. After everyone has exited the stage, Mu Kuei-Yin sings the first passage from the composition as she slowly walks off stage herself.

見師印 又勾啓 多少前情

Seeing the commander-in-chief seal brings back a lot of memories.

4.6: SUMMARY

_The Theatrical Aspect of Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion_

There are only two roles from _Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command_ adapted into _Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion_—Mu Kuei-Yin and Yang Wen-Kwang. The costumes and the make-up of the roles are the same as they would be in _Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command_, with Mu Kuei-Yin appearing in _huadan_ in part one and _wudan_ in part three of the piece and Yang Wen-Kwang appearing in _wusheng_ throughout the piece. The attire for the musicians consists of a long sleeve black shirt and black pants, with red ribbon wrapped around the wrists and the waist for both male and female performers. There are no stage sets for the scenes, only the instruments on stage with Percussion One through Six set up as shown in Example 4.25.
Example 4.25. The stage setup

![Stage Setup Diagram]

**Audience**

Although the fighting scene in part three depicts the battle between Mu Kuei-Yin and the Xiongnus, Yang Wen-Kwang portraits the Xiongnus in the fighting scene instead, without changing costume and make-up. This is not only due to the limited number of the Peking Opera actors and actresses performing the piece, but also is in keeping with the traditional Peking Opera where things are more abstract and meant to leave room for the imagination.

*The Musical Aspect of Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion*

Besides being a three-part composition, the music of *Mu Kuei-Yin In Percussion* also has the following characteristics:
• Story telling: Story telling is one of Miss Hung’s signature styles of composition. The sections incorporating this technique appear in: measures 1-7, measures 114-134, and measures 241-300.

• Adaptation: The composer adapted some passages from *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command* into her piece, made some minor changes, and accompanied the passages in her own compositional style. These passages are evident in measures 10-35, measures 67-78, measures 84-110, measures 135-158, measures 170-189, and measures 220-239.

• Accompaniment styles: There are three accompaniment styles evidenced in this piece.
  a. Either xylophone or vibraphone playing in unison with the vocal line, with the two marimbas realizing the harmony and Percussion Five and Six contributing only rhythmic support. These sections include measures 10-21, measures 29-35, measures 86-103, measures 170-189, and measures 220-239.
  b. Instead of having an instrument playing in unison with the vocal line, all melodic instruments play a motif based on the mode used for the passage being sung. It typically appears in canonic fashion. These sections include measures 65-77 and measures 104-109.
  c. Free and improvisatory accompaniment. This is only used to accompany *yunbai* in measures 22-28.

• Variations of *luogujing*: The composer utilized *luogujing* from *Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command* with varying levels of creative license. These sections include measures 37-64, measures 80-85, and measures 190-213.

• Original composition: The only part of the piece that is solely original and highlights the music as the main role exists in measure 301 till the end.
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## APPENDIX A. GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><em>Ban and yan</em></td>
<td>The meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Changmian</em></td>
<td>Peking Opera orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chou</em></td>
<td>Ugly characters or clowns, often comic and usually male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Daluo</em></td>
<td>Peking Opera large gong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dan</em></td>
<td>Female characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Danpigu</em></td>
<td>A one-sided drum. The drum is constructed by stretching a skin over a set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of wooden wedges bound together in a circle and so hollowed out that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>only a small part of the skin covers a cavity at the center of the drum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Datunggu</em></td>
<td>Large double-sided Chinese tom-toms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dizi</em></td>
<td>A Chinese side-blown flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Erhuang</em></td>
<td>One of the two singing styles of Peking Opera and the <em>jinghu</em> is tuned to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G-D (<em>sol-re</em>). The <em>erhuang</em> melodies are more graceful, sedate, profound,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>simple, lower, and slower than the <em>xipi</em> melodies. In the traditional Peking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opera programs <em>erhuang</em> is more suitable for expressing sad moods and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>used in more serious circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Fangendou</em></td>
<td>Somersaults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gulou</em></td>
<td>The lead drummer who plays the <em>danpigu</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huadan</td>
<td>Translated as ‘flower female role’. <em>Huadan</em> is more seductive and flirtatious than <em>qingyi</em>. They are sometimes of questionable character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutiao qianpu</td>
<td>Front tiger-leap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huqin</td>
<td>See <em>jinghu</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jing</td>
<td>Painted-face male characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jingbai</td>
<td>One of the two types of the dialogue of Peking Opera. <em>Jingbai</em> is similar to the standard dialect in Beijing. It is more cheerful, humorous, and vivid, therefore, it is easier to understand than <em>yunbai</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jingbo (naoba)</td>
<td>Peking Opera crash cymbals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jingerhu</td>
<td>Two-stringed bowed lutes that is hexagonal and made of redwood and is held vertically on the thigh. <em>Jingerhu</em> is tuned lower than <em>jinghu</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jinghu</td>
<td>A two-stringed bowed lute that is round and made of bamboo and is held vertically on the thigh. <em>Jinghu</em> is tuned higher than <em>jingerhu</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunqu</td>
<td>A form of Chinese musical drama that originated prior to Peking Opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laodan</td>
<td>Old female characters. Usually an older mother or other aged woman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laosheng</td>
<td>Educated and dignified men, usually older in age. The officials and emperors. <em>Laosheng</em> are generally of a higher social status and wear long beards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Liuqin**
A soprano lute of China. It is the highest pitched member of the plucked string group of the Chinese orchestras. It has four strings.

**Luogudian**
The cues for Peking Opera gong and drum patterns

**Pipa**
Generic name for a large class of Chinese plucked lutes. *Pipa* has a short neck, a pear-shaped body with a wooden belly. It has four strings and is plucked with all five fingers of right hand while the instrument is held vertically on the thigh.

**Qingyi**
Young female. *Qingyi* is usually a female character of high moral standards with great expectations for herself. For example, a filial daughter, a devoted wife or lover, a good mother, etc. *Qingyi* tends to look downwards and is generally subdued in action.

**Ruan**
A Chinese plucked lute with moon-shaped short-necked body. The name is shortened from *ruan xian*. It has four strings.

**Sanxian**
A Chinese plucked string instrument that employs the resonance of a skin membrane. It has three strings.

**Sheng (instrument)**
A Chinese mouth organ

**Sheng (role)**
Standard male characters

**Shuishoa**
The water sleeves. It is basically a very long sleeve extended by a simply piece of long white cloth.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suona</strong></td>
<td>A conical double-reed Chinese woodwind instrument with a rosewood body and a metallic horn at the end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tianmeng</strong></td>
<td>Heavenly Gate Array</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wenchang</strong></td>
<td>Strings and winds of the Peking Opera orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wenjing</strong></td>
<td>Civilian painted-face male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wuchang</strong></td>
<td>Percussions of the Peking Opera orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wudan</strong></td>
<td>Female fighters who are skilled in the martial arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wujing</strong></td>
<td>Military painted-face male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wusheng</strong></td>
<td>Generals or any man who takes part in battles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wuxiaosheng</strong></td>
<td>Young military males. Young generals or some young men who are skilled in the martial arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Xiaoluo</strong></td>
<td>Peking Opera small gong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Xiaosheng</strong></td>
<td>Younger men, scholars, and never wear beards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Xiaotunggu</strong></td>
<td>Medium double-sided Chinese tom-toms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Xipi</strong></td>
<td>One of the two singing styles of Peking Opera and the <em>jinghu</em> is tuned to A-E (<em>la-mi</em>). The <em>xipi</em> melodies are more vivacious, quicker, and higher, so in the traditional Peking Opera programs <em>xipi</em> is more suitable and used for happier, more light-hearted, courageous, and more exhilarated moods.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Yangqing**  
A multi-stringed Chinese dulcimer in which tone is produced by struck strings. It is played with a pair of elastic bamboo strikers covered with rubber or leather.

**Yueqin**  
A Chinese plucked lute that is moon-shaped and utilize the resonance of a wooden sounding board.

**Yunbai**  
One of the two types of the dialogue of Peking Opera. The vocabulary used in *yunbai* is similar to the Hubai/Kuangzhou accent and dialect. It is more poetic and has a more educated and academia-like sentence structure and vocabulary.

**Yunluo**  
Chinese fixed-pitched gongs. The *yunluo* consists of thirty-six or thirty-seven pitched-gongs with different thicknesses but similar surface areas, suspended from a wooden frame. The *yunluo* is played with a pair of small mallets.

**Zheng**  
A Chinese plucked string instrument with horizontal wooden box resonator and 16 to 21 or more strings stretched over individual bridges.
## Appendix B. List of Works by Chien-Hui Hung

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name of Work</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>冬之旅 THE JOURNEY OF WINTER</td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>木琴協奏曲 MARIMBA CONCERTO</td>
<td>Marimba and string orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>小提琴獨奏曲 VIOLIN SOLO</td>
<td>Violin solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>輪歌三首 TROIS POEMES DE CHANT FUNEBRE</td>
<td>Soprano and piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>幾何 LA GEOMETRIE</td>
<td>Viola and cello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>涅盤 NIRVANA</td>
<td>Pre-recorded tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>五行 LE CERCLE DE CINQ ELEMENTS</td>
<td>Five marimbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>律動 LA TENDANCE ONDULANTE</td>
<td>Oboe and pre-recorded tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>前奏曲 PRELUDE</td>
<td>Chamber orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>法國號獨奏曲 FRENCH HORN SOLO</td>
<td>French horn solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>雙鋼琴二重奏 DUO FOR TWO PIANOS</td>
<td>Two pianos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>絃樂三重奏 TRIO FOR STRINGS</td>
<td>Violin, viola, and cello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>長笛四重奏 FLUTE QUARTET</td>
<td>Flute quartet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>鋼琴五重奏 PIANO QUINTET</td>
<td>Violin, cello, flute, French horn, and piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>山靈廟雨 L’ESPRIT DE MONTAGNE ET DE TEMPLE</td>
<td>2 violins, 2 violas, 2 cellos, double bass, and 2 percussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>二重奏 DUO POUR FLUTE BASSE ET ALTO</td>
<td>Bass flute and viola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>誦妙 LE CHANT TRANSFIGURE</td>
<td>Large chamber ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>傳薪 HERITAGE AND PASSING</td>
<td>Percussion ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>月娘 LA LUNE</td>
<td>Violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, piano, and percussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>木琴協奏曲 MARIMBA CONCERTO</td>
<td>Marimba and 3 percussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>中提琴協奏曲 VIOLA CONCERTO</td>
<td>Viola and string orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>嘗小提琴遇到打擊樂 WHEN VIOLIN MEETS PERCUSSION</td>
<td>Violin and percussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>孕育---中提琴協奏曲 BREED—VIOLA CONCERTO</td>
<td>Viola and orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>一横+一圆+三豎 = ?</td>
<td>Wind quintet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 HORIZONTAL + 1 CIRCLE + 3 VERTICALS = ?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>王昭君 WANG ZHOU-CHUN</td>
<td>Flute and piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>一横+一圆+三豎 = ? II</td>
<td>Wind quintet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 HORIZONTAL + 1 CIRCLE + 3 VERTICALS = ? II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>誦妙II LE CHANT TRANSFIGURE II</td>
<td>Percussion ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>笑佛戲獅 LAUGHING BUDDHA TEASING THE LION</td>
<td>Percussion ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>饒鼓 SPEEY DRUM—CONCERTO FOR TIMPANI AND CHINESE TOM-TOMS</td>
<td>Timpani, Chinese Tom-toms, and percussion ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>鼓之禮讚 TRIBUTE TO DRUM</td>
<td>Percussion ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>笛韻心事 THE REFLECTION OF THE FLUTE—FLUTE CONCERTO</td>
<td>Flute and orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>琴詩 LES POEMES POUR ALTO</td>
<td>Viola solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>白蛇傳 LA SERPENT BLANCHE</td>
<td>Large percussion ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>離魂記(長笛二重奏) THE JOURNEY OF THE SOUL</td>
<td>2 flutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>擊樂畫像 PICTURE THE PERCUSSION</td>
<td>Large percussion ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>年份</td>
<td>作品</td>
<td>类型</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>旅人與歌者 TRAVELOR AND SINGER</td>
<td>Soprano and piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>雅琴揚雪 DANCING SNOW</td>
<td>Percussion solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>點加冠 POINT CROWNED</td>
<td>Percussion ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>絃琴逸炤 A JOURNEY OF STRING AND KEYBOARD</td>
<td>Viola and piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>幻想曲 FANTASIA</td>
<td>Marimba ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>夢紅樓 DREAM OF THE RED MANSION</td>
<td>Marimba solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>默娘傳奇 THE LEGEND OF MO NIANG—FLUTE CONCERTO</td>
<td>Flute and orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>樂自在觀自在心自在 BE HAPPY, BE THOUGHTFUL, BE KIND</td>
<td>Chinese orchestra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX C. LIST OF CROSS-CULTURAL PRODUCTIONS BY THE JU PERCUSSION GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name of the production</th>
<th>Type of the production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>《薪傳》The Heritage</td>
<td>A collaboration with the Cloud Gate Dance Theatre Company in Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>《螢火》The Bonfire</td>
<td>Music Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>《台灣四季》The Four Seasons in Taiwan</td>
<td>Music Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>《狂想·狂響》(夢·風鈴Ⅰ) Rhapsody (Dream of Chimes I)</td>
<td>Music Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>《夢·風鈴Ⅱ》Dream of Chimes II</td>
<td>Music Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>《看得見的聲音》See the Music</td>
<td>Music Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>《蛇年的12個陰晴圓缺》 Les Douze Lunes Du Serpent</td>
<td>A collaboration with the French composer Francois Bernard Mache and Les Percussion de Strasbourg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>《狂放部落》The Wild Village</td>
<td>Music Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>《聆聽·微笑》Listen and Smile</td>
<td>Music Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>《木蘭》Mulan</td>
<td>A collaboration with Guo Guang Opera Company.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D. CONSENT LETTER

December 1, 2010

TO:        Yu-Tzu Huang  
            College of Musical Arts

FROM:      Hillary Harms, Ph.D.  
            HSRB Administrator

RE:        Human Subjects Review Board Project No.: H11D104GE7

TITLE:     A Study of the Relationship Between Traditional Peking Opera and Contemporary Western Percussion Music in Ma Kuei-Yin in Percussion by Chien-Hui Hung

The BGSU Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB) has completed its review of your project involving research with human subjects.

Your project has been approved as submitted. This approval is effective November 30, 2010 and expires on November 29, 2011. You may begin subject recruitment and data collection.

The approved version of the consent document(s) is attached. Consistent with federal OHRP guidance to IRBs, the consent document(s) bearing the HSRB approval/expiration date stamp is the only valid version and copies of the dated document(s) must be used in obtaining consent from research subjects.

You are authorized to use human subjects for 12 months, but only in the manner described in your proposal. If you seek to make any changes in your project activities or procedures (including increases in the number of participants), those changes must be approved by the HSRB prior to their implementation. If any anticipated adverse reactions develop during the course of your project, you must temporarily suspend your research and notify the Chair of the HSRB.

Please notify the Board in writing (or e-mail: hsrb@bgsu.edu) when you have completed your project. If you have any questions, please contact the Chair of the HSRB or me at 372-7716. Good luck with your research project.

COMMENTS:  Stamped consent document is coming to you via US mail.

C. Dr. Roger Schupp

RESEARCH CATEGORY: EXPEDITED
Informed Consent for Miss Chien-Hui Hung

Introduction: My name is Yu-Tzu (Isabelle) Huang, a graduate student from Bowling Green State University. My advisor is Dr. Roger Schupp, associate professor from Bowling Green State University. You are invited to be in a research study on your Mu Kuei-Yin for Percussion. As part of my work on the Doctor of Musical Arts in Contemporary Music in the percussion department, I am conducting a research study on the relationship between traditional Peking Opera and contemporary Western percussion ensemble music.

Purpose: The intention of this study is to examine your Mu Kuei-Yin in Percussion and the Peking Opera play Mu Kuei-Yin Takes Command separately and in relationship to one another. Following the analysis of the music is a discussion of how the Peking Opera performing style changes the rules and styles of Western percussion music in live performance. You may not benefit directly from taking part in this study. However, this study may help me, the percussion society, and musicologists have a better understanding of the cross-cultural effects and the beauty of it. It will not cost you any money and you will not be paid anything.

Procedure: If you agreed to be in this study, I will conduct an interview with you. The interview will include questions about you, your association with Ju Percussion Group, how your ethnic background and Western music education unite in your compositions, and the process of composing Mu Kuei-Yin in Percussion. The interview will take approximately an hour of your time. With your permission, I would also like to tape-record the interview. At last, I will send you a rough draft for accuracy.

Voluntary nature: Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time. You may decide to skip questions or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or explanation. Deciding to participate or not will not impact grades/class standing/relationship to this institution.

Confidentiality/Anonymity Protection: The information collected for this study will be stored in a password-protected computer. I will be the only person who has the access to the data/information you provide. Since part of the study will be based on the one-on-one
interview, the data will not be anonymous. I will quote you directly and reveal your name in the paper. After three years, all this information will be destroyed.

**Risks:** The anticipated risks of this interview are equal to any questions and subsequent answers that deal with your views concerning your philosophies and musical compositions, and your role as an Asian female composer.

**Contact Information:** If you have any questions or comments about this study, please contact Isabelle Huang at (607) 262-0489 or isabellehuang@mac.com or my project advisor Dr. Roger Schupp at (419) 372-2163 or rschupp@bgsu.edu. You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 or hrub@bgsu.edu, if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research.

I have been informed of the purposes, procedures, risks, and benefits of this study. I have had the opportunity to have all my questions answered and I have been informed that my participation is completely voluntary. I agree to participate in this research.

[Signature]

**Participant Signature**