

A Brief Analysis of the Performance Skills and Treatment of Guzheng's 《Cang Ge Yite》

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ABSTRACT

Cang Ge Yite, as a new modern guzheng repertoire emerging in recent years, presents its unique charm and breakthrough no matter in technique, content or form of expression. On the basis of traditional Chinese culture, Chinese and western elements are integrated, and a series of innovative techniques are used to vividly depict the vision and expectation of nature and spring scenery, bringing a fresh audio-visual experience. This article will make a brief analysis of the performance expression of this music composition from three main aspects: the introduction of the composer and the composition background, the special technique and structure of the music, the mode analysis and the coordination of the piano accompaniment.

Keywords: Chinese traditional culture, Modern Gu Zheng composition, Chinese and Western music fusion innovation

1. INTRODUCTION

Cang Ge Quotation is a popular modern guzheng ensemble piece in recent years, which expresses the admiration and awe of nature and life. It was composed by Chen Zhe, a new generation composer who graduated from the Central Conservatory of Music.

In the background of the lush power of natural scenery as the theme of the music, convey a positive sense of vitality, aimed to tell people to cherish the spring scenery, but also to cherish the time and life.

She made further breakthroughs and improvements in the guzheng playing techniques, mode and tonality, as well as coordination with the piano, according to the theme and style of the music, making the whole music more expressive and refreshing to the audience, bringing unprecedented audio-visual experience.

2. BACKGROUND INTRODUCTION TO COMPOSER AND COMPOSITION OF REPERTOIRE

Chen Zhe, female, young composer, graduated from the composition department of the China Central Conservatory of Music, with a master's degree. Her main works include: "Cang Song" Guzheng and Orchestra (later added with piano concerto version);

Guzheng solo "Ink Shadow Danqing"; Erhu and piano "return"; Dance music "Looking for White Dew"; Banhu and String Quartet "Green Lantern Scene"; "Five Tastes of Dreams" -- for two violins; Art song "The Past like the Streamer". During her studies, Chen Zhe not only created a lot of excellent works, but also was familiar with piano and guzheng, which laid a good foundation for her later creation of "Cang Ge Yite". Chen Zhe has won the "Original Works Award" in the 31st Shanghai Spring International Music Festival in Shanghai. The excellent works created by her have been selected by the creative project of "Collaborative Innovation Training High-end Dance Creative Talent Program between the Central Conservatory of Music and Beijing Dance Academy" for many times, and have been listed as the excellent works in the "Music Dance Collection" and performed in the National Centre for the Performing Arts. The author is often invited by domestic top orchestras and many excellent performers, and has participated in the arrangement of many excellent works, which were performed in public and greatly praised and commented. From the author's accumulation of learning, a lot of practice and her award-winning experience, we can see that the composer has a very good and strong foundation in composition.[1]

In the development of Chinese folk music, guzheng is a representative musical instrument, which has been

recognized by all walks of life, and a large number of guzheng music has emerged accordingly. The traditional playing skills of Guzheng are relatively simple. Usually the right hand plucks the strings to convey the music through single tones, arpeggios and finger shaking, etc., while the left hand presses, knead, quiver, move and polish, and adds up and down slides, etc. The two hands have different functions but mutually bring out the best in each other, presenting a harmonious situation, which is very in line with the knowledge of harmony between Yin and Yang in ancient China. Modern zither has added new ideas on the traditional zither skills. The left hand can not only play a polishing role, but also cross the previous boundary to join the right hand to take the tone, so that the left hand is more flexible in the performance, the musical effect is more rich, the playing skills of both hands cooperate with each other, and there is a higher requirement on the technical level. In the music creation aspect, art forms and works are often connected with the times, modern guzheng music more characteristics in the new period than traditional repertoire, more can reflect social reality and the feelings of people, and focus on bitonality paragraphs, from past or melody for the development of the overall harmony sound.[2]

The original title of "Cang Ge Yite", "Qing Shao", which means "beautiful spring", was inspired by the Tang Dynasty poet Wei Yuandan in both its title and content. An ancient poem of the. In early spring, people wear colorful headdresses to celebrate the birth of the human race. It is also a way to celebrate the rebirth of spring, when everything is full of vitality and prosperity. In ancient times, people relied on the sky for food and regarded it as their god. Spring, as the beginning of all things, is a symbol of everything new and vibrant and beautiful. Dictionaries, "erya interpretation of the day, the father of spring will be likened to the" heaven "and" Yang ", and the first to "spring" as the theme of the works of the first word is a "pale" and "song" take a song to celebrate, "lead" is a much longer poetry genre in ancient China, in this work can be more free processing middle finger to the beat. Spring is the beginning of everything, can reflect the freshness and power of things. Originally this zheng music was created for the orchestra, and later, after the author's adaptation, arranged a version of the cooperation of guzheng and piano. In the whole music, the use of a short introduction to start, gradually expanded, and the spring scene presented. On the basis of his own perception, the author makes reasonable use of modern composition techniques to highlight the unique skills of guzheng and put the musical motivation through the whole music. Only from the traditional music creation, absorb the paragraph of the music structure, can realize the transformation of Sanban, Adagio, Allegro."Cang Ge Quotation" is a new excellent guzheng concerto combining Chinese and western music elements. The

work itself has traditional cultural connotation. When the composer created this work, he made every effort to perfectly integrate the modern western creative techniques with the traditional Chinese folk music, which is embodied in the music style, the structure of the music form, the guzheng string setting, the rhythm and the rhythm and the pitch material, etc., all of which have the characteristics of Chinese and western music. With the accelerating speed of globalization, more and more western playing skills have been integrated into the traditional Chinese music. Zheng music composers not only need to continue the traditional national cultural elements, but also need to constantly develop and innovate.[4]

From the title of the song, we can feel the rich traditional Chinese cultural contained in it, which gives the audience a gorgeous and vigorous picture of spring. Only the composition's title has conveyed the verdant spring and the vast nature, and also contains the meaning of exploration of nature and spring. At the same time, it means that spring is the beginning of all things, everything is new and full of possibilities, and encourages people to face and explore life with a positive attitude. The traditional Chinese music "The Night of Flowers and Moonlight over the Spring River" is also a poem written by the Tang Dynasty poet Zhang Ruoxu. It is based on the beautiful scenery of the spring river. Poem "River of the spring tidewater even sea level, sea moon total rises, with the waves thousands of miles, wherever river has no moon lights." The music was originally adapted from the Chinese traditional lute music "Flute Drum in the Sunset".

Described as the frost of the moon covered with layers of waves in the spring river, a bright moon hanging in the deep night sky, the fragrance of flowers accompanied by the river quietly flowing, sandbar white sand and moonlight interweave the soft and quiet night scene.[3]

The music shows a clear and elegant landscape painting, expressing the endless admiration and appreciation of the beautiful scenery along the river on a spring night. The melody is graceful and elegant, and the rhythm is smooth and varied. It depicts the beautiful scenery on the river under the moon. The moon rises in the east, the boat ripples on the lake, and the shadow of the flowers swaying on the west bank. The whole song is soft and gentle, graceful and fluent. Both pieces of music are based on the admiration of natural scenery and the feeling of ancient poetry, but the composition techniques and style of the music have changed greatly, from the traditional Chinese short lyrical repertoire to --Artistic conception, technical and international concerto, no matter in style, technology or the overall acoustics have an all-round improvement. It also highlights the rapid progress of the overall composition of Chinese traditional repertoire in recent decades. Since

2012, Chen Zhe has gradually shifted his focus from western music to folk music. The composer was able to create such a novel and challenging piece of music as Cang Ge Yin, which was directly related to her ability to play guzheng. Only when we have a comprehensive understanding of the musical instrument guzheng, such as its timbre and expressive force, can we promote its strengths as much as possible in the composition, and give new thinking and element collision on the basis of traditional techniques, as well as room for innovation and improvement. In March 2014, the young Zheng player Song Xinxin [Song Xinxin, a young Zheng player, a young teacher of China Conservatory of Music, and the first Chinese Zheng player who holds the Cultural Bonus Award, the Golden Bell Award and the Golden Award of CCTV National Instrumental Music Contest]Invited to the CCTV "Glorious Blooming New Top 10 Young Guzheng Players Concert", she needed to present a new work, so she sent an invitation to the composer Chen Zhe, and the prototype of "Cang Ge Quotation", Qing Shao, was born. The performance was held in March, the spring of the year, which symbolizes renewal and vitality as well as a beautiful and brilliant scene, hence the name "Qing Shao". In April of the same year, Chen Zhe expanded the music and became the guzheng concerto "Cang Ge Quotation" known to us

today, which was premiered by Song Xinxin at the opening concert of the 31st "Shanghai Spring" International Music Festival. Later, this song was gradually favored and recognized by people in the industry. Cang Song Quote (expanded version) was perfectly presented to the audience in the final of the 11th Golden Bell Award for Chinese Music Guzheng Competition in November 2017, and the complete version was also spread.

3. MODE AND TRACK STRUCTURE ANALYSIS

3.1. Mode of work and tuning

To tune a string is to raise the pitch of an empty string to a certain pitch. In the songs "pale song led" is using the tuning constitutes the harmony of its unique sound, while keeping the traditional guzheng pentatonic scale based on the modes of ancient Chinese music (D) to join some seven sound tuning of order, will arrange, 21 of the strings were reasonable tone is divided into four tone, as a result of the change of minimum five sound bass area parts more rich color and more vigorous.



Fig 1. Tuning up

The traditional way of setting strings in the guzheng is to cycle on the pentatonic scale with the palace as the tonic. However, in the process of creation of Cang Ge Yin, the composer realized the limitation of pentatonic mode of D palace, which was very single in pitch and hearing, and the cycle of pentatonic mode made the music theme lack of power. While retaining the tradition, the track adds two inflations in the double bass area, and the small second and third degrees are added on the basis of the D-E-#F-A-B traditional D house pentatonic scale, which is reflected as the scale of the bass part E-# F-G- B-C. This makes the acoustics sound more compact, extending the imagination of the musical

expression, making the music more mysterious, and allowing different room for imagination in the sense of hearing. This kind of tuning is very new to the traditional guzheng repertoire, and also establishes its unique style.

3.2. Use of continuous bass

The bass has always given people a sense of stability in color. Guzheng as the main instrument performed a typical continuous bass performance in section 52-57, which played a better role of preparation and continuity.

The theme and motive of the music are reproduced, but compared with the introduction part, the music is more relaxed and more fluid. At the end of 138 bars, the music is pushed to a climax, and the gorgeous coda of 147-181 bars is introduced at the end. The rhythm

changes to Presto $\text{♩}=96$ on 6/8. At the end of the music, both the speed and the overall sound effect are exerted to the extreme, and then the whole music is finished at the end of the chord with the most fortissimo.

(1-19)	(20-120)	(121-122)	(123-146)	(147-181)
19	101	2	24	35
Rubato $\text{♩}=50$	Allegro $\text{♩}=148$ $\text{♩}=152$ $\text{♩}=156$ $\text{♩}=164$ $\text{♩}=160$	Rubato	Adagio $\text{♩}=56$	Presto $\text{♩}=96$
4/4, 13/4, 8/4, 6/4, 4/4	4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/8, 3/8, 2/8, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4	8/4, 16/4	4/4	6/8

Fig 4. Section, speed, beat number division

Continuous change of beat number is used for many times in the music of the free sheet and the allegro. The composer uses the changing beat number at any time to accurately record her irregular and uneven music thoughts, which also plays an important role in increasing the rhythm effect. Make the whole repertoire more free and comfortable, players can according to their own emotions have a greater play and processing space. From the connotation of the music, it also highlights the infinite possibilities of nature.

4. SPECIAL TECHNIQUE ANALYSIS

As a representative modern guzheng repertoire, "Cang Ge Yin" has a very important reason for its novel

and unique application of playing techniques in addition to the above mentioned modes and musical structure. Some of them are almost unused in most of guzheng's songs before. The innovative and unique skills add more charming colors to this song.

4.1. Skipping pitches

Skip-play is common used in the piano music, where half of the note is played."Cang Song Quotation" uses the piano jumping technique for reference. After playing with the right hand, the sound of the string will be stopped immediately without affecting the sound of the string, and the remaining sound will be stopped to play a light, short and elastic music.



Fig 5. music sample from Cang Ge Yite chapter 2

In bar 44 to 51 of allegro, the skip plays four repeated patterns in a three-beat bar. This new rhythm pattern injects fresh vitality into the music. This irregular beat is also one of the difficulties in this song, and it also puts forward higher requirements for the counterposition of guzheng and piano.

4.2. Stopping the pitch in a sudden

A unique technique used in traditional Chinese instruments, it means to stop the music suddenly when it is very strong, so as to achieve the ultimate performance effect.



Fig 6. music sample from Cang Ge Yite chapter 1



Fig 7. music sample from Cang Ge Yite chapter 5

At the end of the above example, the use of the two halting strings in the allegro makes the guzheng have the effect of stopping the sound. When the strength is strong, it stops abruptly, giving people space for aftertaste. Section 6 part after repeated sol sound performance when must pay attention to the tone and intonation, quaver use right hand thumb play single refers to, when the transition to a semiquaver use right hand thumb and index finger play alternately, ensure smooth tone and shape of the hand, in the strength and speed of play by the slow fading fast, strong by the weak gradually, finally strong arid strings. In bar 181,

the right hand scratches the string with a strong sweep of the left hand, and then the left hand stops the bass immediately. At this point, due to the inertia of the playing direction, the direction of sweeping the string can be changed to downward so as to stop the sound.

4.3. Wipe the strings

String-rubbing refers to rubbing the palm of the hand near the edge of the string back and forth according to the needs of music processing, light or heavy, to create a special acoustics effect.



Fig 8. music sample from Cang Ge Yite chapter 1

In the introduction part of the music, the left hand rubs the strings with the palm of the left hand in the high-pitched area of the code. The sound generated by the friction imitates the rustling of small animals and the movement of leaves in the wind. Here we should pay attention to the control of very weak strength. When the strength of the circular tone sequence in the right hand becomes stronger, the playing technique can be transferred to the scraping on the left side to adapt to the strength of the music.

connected with the addition of piano accompaniment is, on the basis of the theme, the addition of the piano parts to enhance the work the richness of sound, made up for the limitation of only playing the guzheng, make listening more complete, the main playing guzheng and piano accompaniment, the foil each other, make up for each other, the two parts make the sound effects are more varied.[5]

5. EXPRESSION IN CONJUNCTION WITH PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT

"Cang Song Quotation" this concerto, only through the sense of listening, you can fully appreciate the meaning of spring, as if the breath of spring blowing on your face. To express the spring and life of praise, full of love and pursuit of life, full of vitality of the melody infected the mood of each audience. This is closely

5.1. foil effect

Offset means that the melody part of the main musical instrument of guzheng is more complete in the sense of hearing and more in tune with the accompaniment of piano. It has more prominent characteristics, more distinct artistic conception and more rich emotions. In Example 4-3-1, the piano accompaniment sets off the main melody with a very weak octave vibrator, showing a mysterious feeling that spring seedlings are about to emerge from the earth.



Fig 9. music sample from Cang Ge Yite chapter 1

In Example 4-1-2, the sixteenth notes in the piano accompaniment form a flowing melody in the 211-219 bars of the adagio, which, together with the long swing

of the main melody of the guzheng, gradually foil the excited mood, just like a warm spring breeze.



Fig 10. music sample from Cang Ge Yite chapter 4

5.2. Filling effect

The filling effect of piano accompaniment refers to the filling of the blank melody in the main melody of guzheng. Example 4-1-3. In the Allegro part, the author uses arrows to mark the supplement of piano

accompaniment. In this section, the main melody of Guzheng has a lot of rest, and if there is no piano melody, the main melody will be blank and incoherent. Piano accompaniment melody is just in the main melody gap to supplement, increased the sense of jumping, like a deer jumping and running in the forest feeling.



Fig 11. music sample from Cang Ge Yite chapter 1

5.3. Contrast effect

The contrast effect is like a dialogue between piano and guzheng. The piano accompaniment melody and the guzheng main melody go hand in hand to enrich the

expression of melody. In Example 4-1-4, the melody of guzheng is a sixteenth note arpeggio. Without the piano accompaniment, it would be chaotic. At this time, the piano plays the role of the main melody, so that the theme melody is stable.



Fig 12. music sample from Cang Ge Yite chapter 3

5.4. Strengthen the effect

The ensemble of piano and guzheng promotes the further development of melody, which makes the expression of emotion more tense and richer. In

Example 4-1-5, in order to show the jump of melody, the main melody of guzheng uses the constantly changing stress to reflect it. Piano accompaniment texture uses the jump in the stress to strengthen the jump of the main melody and enhance the listening effect.

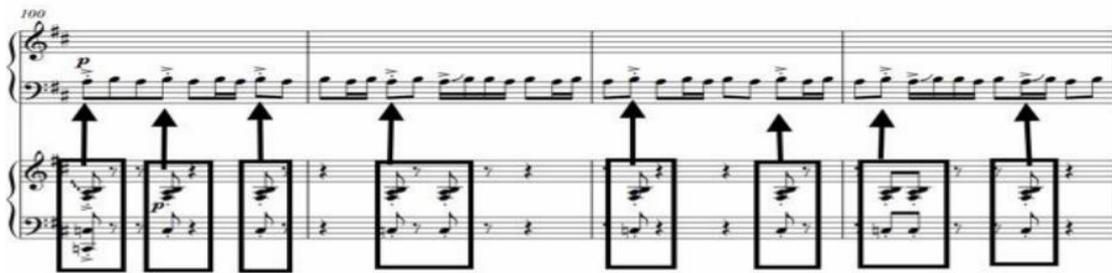


Fig 13. music sample from Cang Ge Yite chapter 4

5.5. Enrich the effect

The piano accompaniment enriches the harmony color in "Cang Ge Yin". Guzheng is a traditional Chinese stringed instrument, which has great limitations in the transformation of its vocal range. In order to increase the color of the work, piano accompaniment is

extremely important. In Example 4-1-6, the main melody of Guzheng is a simple monotone playing. Although there is a touch up by the left hand, it still sounds monotonous. At this time, the piano accompaniment adds chord arpeggios to the first beat of each bar, which instantly enriches the melody color.



Fig 14. music sample from Cang Ge Yite chapter 4

6. CONCLUSION

This paper makes a general analysis of the performance of "Cang Ge Yin" from the aspects of the track and composer's background, the special skills used in the music, the analysis of the mode of the music, and the mutual cooperation with the piano accompaniment. "Cang Ge Yin", as one of the excellent contemporary Guzheng works, is both innovative and technical. Based on the traditional Chinese music, the music integrates with the style and composition techniques of western

music, which fully expands the color of the music and makes the whole music more complete and vivid. As one of China's traditional local musical instruments, guzheng has not only been a monophonic melody instrument in the development of more than 2500 years, but to give full play to the strength of this instrument. More and more modern composers are also exploring more possibilities and combining guzheng music with new elements to promote it to the world. While inheriting Chinese culture, it also keeps pace with the development trend of world music. While conveying

Chinese culture and artistic conception, it is also more international, so that more people can understand the charm of guzheng art.

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