A STUDY OF PIANO WORKS BY FORMUSICA: THE *NEW TAIWAN MUSIC PIANO WORKS, VOLUMES I–VII*

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts,
The City University of New York

2006

UMI Number: 3213173

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Music in satisfaction for the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts.

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF PIANO WORKS BY FORMUSICA: THE *NEW TAIWAN MUSIC PIANO WORKS, VOLUMES I–VII*

by

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This dissertation provides the first systematic study of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* (*Piano Works*), created by Formusica *Arbeitsgruppe der Komponisten*, the group of dedicated composers established by the Wach (German for "Awake") School of Music founded in 1983 in Taipei. The founding of the Wach School and the composition of the *Piano Works* is the result of an innovative effort initiated by two highly respected Chinese musicians and educators—Professor Mao-Shuen Chen and Professor En Wang. Their goal was to reestablish and promote a wider interest in and appreciation of native Chinese and Taiwanese music among Taiwanese students, performers, and audiences. The *Piano Works* collection currently includes one hundred thirty-six pieces published in seven volumes with an eighth volume in progress.

Formusica, now the most important and influential organization of native composers in Taiwan, plays the leading role in encouraging the composition of new Taiwanese music, and also provides opportunities for Taiwanese music to be heard by the public. Formusica continues to work avidly to develop a complete music pedagogy composed solely of Taiwanese composers' works, suitable for effectively training Taiwan's music students. The varied compositions of the *Piano Works* have been written with attention to three goals shared by Formusica and Wach: 1) to bring forth new ideas in music composition, 2) to preserve and promote an appreciation of traditional music customs, and 3) to support music education while deepening the personal experience of musical study.

This dissertation examines the origins and ambitions of Formusica and the Wach School, surveys the historical features affecting Taiwanese music, and provides an in-depth analysis of the musical components of the *Piano Works* with a chapter devoted to each of the following: Chinese modes and scales, modern compositional techniques and notations, Taiwanese native folk traditions, and pedagogical elements. The preparation of these analyses involved both close study of the *Piano Works* and personal interviews with many of the composers and also the founders of the Wach School, whose pioneering and courageous project has already begun to succeed in reestablishing a deeper appreciation of both native and contemporary music among the people of Taiwan.

Acknowledgements

It would not have been possible to complete this project without the support of my teachers, friends, and family members. I wish to express my gratitude to the many people who have helped me persevere in the completion of my doctoral degree. Most especially, I wish to thank Dr. Erickson, my advisor, for his patience and tireless support. I also would like to thank Dr. Rupprecht and Dr. Graziano for their comments upon reading my dissertation drafts. The members of my defense committee and Dr. Blum, the Chairman, have all been of great help and very generous with their encouragement.

I am deeply grateful to Professors Mao-Shuen Chen and En Wang, for their inspiration and guidance, and to the Formusica composers who have worked with me. They are all truly admirable artists and deserving of great respect for their passion and enthusiasm for the advancement of Taiwanese contemporary music. I would also like to express my thankfulness to a very special person, Carol Stone, who has helped to guide me in my writing in English.

I am deeply appreciative of my extended family in New York. The Wieland family has loved me as their own daughter, and they all have supported me through the challenges of this project. My dear sister, Shih-Yi, has been truly helpful when I have felt discouraged. I am also very grateful to my husband, who helped me with the household chores when I had to work on my project. Finally, I would like to dedicate this whole work to my dear parents.

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Chapter I

Taiwan's Wach (Awake) School of Music: Its Origins and Aspirations

Western composers in the nineteenth century developed nationalistic musical styles as a means to express the distinctive characteristics of their own countries. Composers incorporated recognizable national elements in their works, using a variety of methods. A composition might include or be based upon ideas with an identifiable regional identity or recognizable historical stylistic attributes, such as melodies and rhythms from folksongs and dances. Alternatively, composers might create their own musical expressions resonant of national customs or scenes from history.

The Hungarian composer Béla Bartók (1881–1945) raised the art and spirit of musical nationalism to its fullest expression in his twentieth-century compositions, especially with his incorporation of folk elements, thus demonstrating, both to his contemporaries and to younger generations of composers, that it is possible to find new and effective expressive means within traditional frameworks.[1] Bartók's approach became a model, inspiring modern composers to research and assimilate their own native music in the course of writing their compositions.

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[1] John Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music* (New York: Dover, 1972), 374. Nationalism was an important influence in Romantic music. Differences among national musical styles were accentuated by Romantic composers such as Chopin, Liszt, Dvorák and Brahms. Chopin's mazurkas are composed in a greatly refined Polish dance style as are his polonaises which reflect another Polish dance tradition. Liszt made free use of Hungarian folk tunes in his nineteen *Hungarian Rhapsodies*. Romantic composers took this idiom quite seriously in music making and used it frequently as an expression of their patriotism.

Ultimately, the incorporation of folk elements in music has become an important compositional approach worldwide, as artists strive to preserve, cultivate, and communicate the identities of their homelands in an increasingly tightly interwoven international community. Taiwanese composers have sought inspiration from the heritage of traditional Chinese music, and composers of works with native emphasis are eager to attract the interest of performers and audiences. This chapter overviews the origins of the Wach (German for "Awake") School of Music in the context of Taiwanese musical pedagogy over the past ten years. It will also further clarify the aspirations of the Wach movement and its creation of Formusica *Arbeitsgruppe der Komponisten* (Work Group of Composers), as outlined by its founders, Professor En Wang and Professor Mao-Shuen Chen.

Over the course of the last century, numerous international music institutes—such as Yamaha, Kawai, Orff, Kodaly, Dalcroze, and Suzuki—have successfully introduced their respective teaching methods worldwide. These institutes, with branches in Taiwan, have long been offering music students and their teachers systematic and effective methods for study. In all of these established methods however, there is the danger that teachers and students may become singularly focused on the Western-style music the institutes have chosen for their repertoire, while failing to emphasize sufficiently and encourage exploration of Taiwan's (or any other region's) native music. As a result, Taiwanese students learn to perform Western music and show little interest in studying, interpreting, or performing the works of their own country. This trend has increasingly concerned not only composers, but also Taiwanese teachers. It is now recognized that

Taiwan's distinctive and fascinating musical heritage, past and present, could become lost.

Beginning in the early 1960s, numerous Taiwanese composers became active in focusing on collaborative efforts to promote their works and the music of Taiwan. Several composers' groups were formed during this time. The most notable among these were the *Jr Yue Shiau Ji* (Music-Making Group) and the *Shin Yue Chu Tsou* (New Music Performing Group) formed in 1961 and led by native composer Hsu Tsang-Houei (1929–2000). The *Jiang Lang Yue Ji* (Ocean Wave Music Group) and the *Shiang Jih Kuei Yue Huei* (Sun Flower Music Group) were later established in 1962 and 1967 by composers Mao-Shuen Chen and Shuei-Long Ma (b. 1939), respectively. This movement of gathering native composers in support of indigenous music was an important milestone in the history of Taiwanese music.[2]

None of these groups, however, lasted for long. The composers in these groups met with an unexpected obstacle. Taiwanese performing artists, who had been trained with predominantly Western-style methods, were not particularly interested in performing works of composers from their native land; thus, many Taiwanese composers of the mid-to-late twentieth century were compelled to express themselves through clearly Western idioms so that their works would be heard. This phenomenon was also the result of native composers themselves being trained through the study of Western-style music. Although the situation has improved, the music of Taiwanese composers who write in styles inspired by indigenous features

[2] Bih-Jiuan Cheng, *Taiwan shin yin yue shi* (Taipei: Yue-Yun, 1995) 59-61.

has been sorely neglected. This music needs most urgently to be played by native music students.

An increasing number of music educators in Taiwan have finally become determined to use indigenous Chinese music in teaching.[3] Dedicated and creative teachers have come to understand there is much at stake in developing a pedagogical process steeped in native musical custom so that young musicians can be nurtured and challenged within the framework of both their modern culture and their historical heritage.

In direct response to this concern, the Wach School of Music was established in 1983 in Taipei, Taiwan. A courageous and innovative effort to reestablish and promote a wider interest in and appreciation of native Chinese music among Taiwanese students, performers, and audiences, the school was founded by two dedicated and highly respected Chinese musicians and educators, Professor Mao-Shuen Chen (b. 1936) and Professor En Wang (b. 1948). Professor Mao-Shuen Chen is an active composer and music educator, formerly the Chairman of the Music Department and currently Professor of Composition at the National Taiwan Normal University. Professor En Wang is a professor of Piano, also at the National Taiwan Normal University. Professors Chen and En Wang are collaborating to develop a complete music pedagogy composed solely of Taiwanese composers' works, suitable for effectively training Taiwan's music students.

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[3] Jiann-Jong Chaiu, *Music Education Conference* (Taipei: Taiwan Normal University, 2003) 203. Shih-Tze Yau, *Taiwan Shiang tu yi shu wen hua jia jr ji chi lou shr shiue shiau jiau yu de jung yau shing* [A New Approach to Contemporary Music Education,] (M.A. diss. Taipei: Taiwan Normal University, 2003) 196.

A significant musical figure in the West, who supports endeavors such as that of Chen and En Wang, is Chinese composer Wen-Chung Chou (b. 1923). He has served as the long-time chairman of the Music Department at Columbia University and also founded there, in 1978, the Center for United States-China Arts Exchange.[4] Chou has been actively involved both in the conservation of Chinese indigenous music and in expanding the circle of international cultural interactions with an eye toward globally supported advancement of the arts[5]. In his article "Wenren and Culture," published in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, Chou expresses his concerns about the impact of Western music on Asian composers:

> …increasing waves of aspiring young Asian artists have become exposed to fast-moving Western artistic developments. Inevitably these artists have also come under the influence of Western trends and fashions because they lack a solid foundation in their own cultural legacies.[6]

At the 2003 Asian Music Festival, held in Tokyo, Chou again voiced his concern about Asian composers' works:

> …many of the young and younger composers are still constrained by the style and taste of their teachers, or by trends in western societies in which they happen to be studying or living. ...My own overall impression of the works presented in the Festival is that most of them sound very western or even "fashionable," while few of the composers suggested any in-depth interest in evolving music out of their own heritage.[7]

There are various factors affecting the delay of cultural development in East Asia. Neglect of the arts and of arts education have both certainly been major

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[4] Wen-Chung Chou, "Wenren and Culture," *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, ed. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau. (Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 2004) 209.

[4] Chou.

[5] "The Composer," David Tsang, 1 April 2006 <http://www.chouwenchung.org/composer/frame.html>.

[6] Chou, "Wenren and Culture," 212.

[7] "Some Afterthoughts," Wen-Chung Chou, 2003, Asian Music Festival in Tokyo. 28 March 2006 <http://www.jfc-i.org/amf2003report/framepage.htm >

contributors to this cultural deficit.[8] Chou is not the only artist who has felt the urgency of the need for cultural promotion and conservation. In Taiwan, many music educators have shared the same feelings. Ethnomusicologist Tsang-Houei Hsu (1929–2001) was a respected native composer who made great contributions through his research on Taiwanese musical culture and compilation of Taiwan's music. Hsu was a friend of Chou. The two first met in Manila in 1966, and they maintained a lifelong relationship, sharing their thoughts and ideas and supporting one another in their goals. As recalled by Chou (in his Keynote Lecture, in the first conference on Asian Music held in Asia and organized by Asians) Chou, Hsu, and a group of close friends were having a conversation when someone complained to Chou about how Asian concerns and aspirations were then ignored in the West. Chou responded by recommending the formation of an international music association for Asians. Hsu immediately took the idea seriously, and several years later with a few colleagues (including Professor Chen), Hsu established the Asian Composers League. Chou also asked that an expression of gratitude be made at the Tokyo conference in memory of Hsu and his colleagues.[9]

[8] Chou, "Wenren and Culture," 212.

[9] "Beyond Identity," Wen-Chung Chou, 2003, Asian Music Festival in Tokyo. 28 March 2006 <http://www.jfc-i.org/amf2003report/framepage.htm >.

Formusica *Arbeitsgruppe der Komponisten* (Work Group of Composers)

In 1983, the year of its founding, The Wach School of Music created Formusica *Arbeitsgruppe der Komponisten* as an entity to support Taiwanese composers and the ambitious mission of the School. The choice of a German title was influenced by Chen's conducting research for two years at Vienna University and Wang's study at the *Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst* in Vienna from 1985 to 1986. Under the guidance of The Wach School of Music, Formusica (originally organized by Chen) has taken full responsibility for developing an effective and engaging native pedagogical repertoire for the training, stimulation, and inspiration of Taiwanese music students. The organization consists of young composers who share the same interest as the founder—to compose Taiwanese music that is innovative yet based in tradition, while keeping both educational and artistic purposes in mind.[10] With the greatest dedication and effort of all involved, Formuisca has become the most important and influential organization of native composers in Taiwan. Formusica plays the leading role in encouraging and supporting the composition of Taiwanese music and also provides opportunities for native composers' music to be heard by the public.

In its first twelve years, Formusica concentrated primarily on the area of music education. Its composers have compiled an original, systematic, and progressive teaching method for use in local music schools. The organization also published a series of books describing methods which endeavor to realize the full musical

[10] Mao-Shuen Cheng and En Wang, personal interview, 3 June 2004.

potential of children. These instructional texts cover many aspects of music rudiments including ear-training, rhythm, sight-reading, and theory. Published by The Wach School of Music, Formusica books are widely used in the music departments of universities as well as in high schools in Taiwan.

Formusica has also responded to the challenge of stimulating interest among Taiwan's musicians in the study and performance of Taiwanese composers' works. Formusica composers believe that it is a lack of familiarity with Chinese-style harmonies and sounds that prevents performers from taking the initiative in native-music exploration. Feeling the responsibility to carry on Taiwan's musical heritage, Formusica is committed to the commissioning and publication of a large number of piano pieces in 1994. The resulting compilation of new works in a series of published volumes, the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*, was a coalescing of educational and artistic intentions and gradually has obtained favorable attention from local teachers in Taiwan.

The Compositional Goals of Formusica

The compositions of Formusica and *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* embody Chen's expectations that contemporary music should assimilate both innovative ideas and traditional elements, while also supporting the educational mission of the Wach School.[11] These interwoven purposes of Formusica are encapsulated in three goals): 1) to bring forth new ideas in music composition; 2) to preserve and promote an appreciation of traditional music customs; and 3) to support music education. A detailed discussion of these objectives follows.

[11] Chen, personal interview, 3 June 2004.

1. To Bring Forth New Ideas in Music Composition

Formusica strives to provide a means for Taiwanese audiences to feel closer to their music while at the same time allowing composers the freedom to search for new and personal modes of musical expression. To establish a distinctive compositional style that is both personal and innovative is a high priority for Formusica composers, who are encouraged by Professor Chen to search for new ideas in music composition, though it is through the process of transformation of what is already established that an individual composer may create a unique musical language. Formusica's principle goal is founded upon Professor Chen's vision which is similar to that of Wen-Chung Chou.[12] According to Chou:

> These are tantalizing developments: more and more Asian composers are now part of Western culture, while more and more divergent cultures join the Asian music community. In time, both should have a major impact on the inevitable–the emergence of a world culture through layers of cultural interaction and sharing of heritages.[13]

Thus, Formusica composers do not limit their vision only to the Taiwan area. These young composers strive to stay abreast of the trends of new Asian music and many are members of the Asian Composers League. Furthermore, they take time to travel abroad (during breaks from their teaching duties) in order to attend international music symposia for the purpose of absorbing stimulating new ideas to assist in their cultivation of a new musical culture. It is in this way that Formusica supports young Taiwanese composers in searching for new modes of expression while still creating music that is inherently Taiwanese.

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[12] "The Man," David Tsang, 28 March, 2006 <http://www.chouwenchung.org/man/frame.html>.
[13] Chou, "Beyond Identity."

Composers exploring traditional Chinese scales might modify them by raising or lowering a particular pitch in order to create unusual harmonies. Individual composers might prefer particular combinations of intervals such as fourths and fifths or tone clusters, thus producing works with recognizably characteristic sounds and colors. According to composer Wen-Pin Lee, the Formusica organization does not dictate to the composers what they are to write. Each individual composer is constantly experimenting and trying out new ideas. This outlook occurs not just in Taiwan but in other Asian countries as well.[14] The *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* series incorporates a wide variety of styles and reflects Formusica composers' commitment to personal creativity.

2. To Preserve and Promote an Appreciation of Traditional Music Customs

If Taiwanese students and musicians are to become interested in studying, understanding, and even appreciating the beauty of their own native music, it is necessary to preserve that music's distinctively Taiwanese traits and characteristics. In addition to Westernized traditional music, there are distinct ethnic groups and corresponding categories of music that have existed in parallel throughout Taiwanese music history up to the present time. These include aboriginal music and the Han-people's folk music.[15]

In terms of music history, the music that best symbolizes Taiwan is one genre of the folk music of the Han people, often referred to as NanKuan music. Its history

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[14] Wen-Pin Lee, personal interview, 3 April 2006.

[15] Tsang-Houei Hsu, *Taiwan yin yue shi luenn shuh gao* [A History of Taiwanese Music] (Taipei: Chiuan-Yin, 1991), 103. Tsang-Houei Hsu's 1991 *History of Taiwanese Music* is the detailed, authoritative and most widely read text on the subject. Professor Hsu was the first Taiwanese composer who devoted his life to collecting and researching valuable information about the history of Taiwan's music. He was also a founding member of the Asian Composers League. "Han-People" refers to ancient Chinese race.

goes back to as early as the Tang Dynasty (618–907 A.D.). NanKuan music was brought to Taiwan by Chinese settlers from the southern part of Fukien Province of China around the end of the sixteenth century. Over the past thousand years, NanKuan music was also widely spread to countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong-Kong, the Philippines, and Singapore by large numbers of Fukien emigrants.

NanKuan music is a traditional native music that is still an important part of local customs, special services, and ceremonies in the villages of Taiwan. However, without the interest and support of native students and musicians, the performance of NanKuan music in concert halls has been decreasing.

As Formusica has recognized, the serious decline in the number of native-music performances is due primarily to the inability of Taiwan's musicians to continue to develop their own indigenous music. Shue-Long Ma (b. 1939), the well-known Taiwanese composer of *A Sketch of the Rainy Harbor* for solo piano (1969), believes that folk music is irreplaceable by any other.

According to Ma:

> Folk music may sound simple, but [it is] full of vitality and spirit. Native composers should apply the essence of Taiwanese music in their works because the only way to identify the musical language of Taiwan is through composer's musical heritage)[16].

In order to arouse the interest of performers and audiences alike, Formusica composers are encouraged to utilize diverse ways of incorporating folk materials into their music. Founder Chen believes that a folk melody is most successfully

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[16] Su-Feng Yu, "Taiwan jin sanshi nian xiandai yinyue fazhan zhi tansuo *1945-1975* [Inquiries into the Development of Modern Music in Taiwan from 1945 to 1975]" (M. A. diss., National Taiwan Normal University, 1990) 173. Selection translated by Tien-Yi Chiang.

represented not by its simple restatement, but rather by an intriguing and appealing incorporation into a modern composition. Just a fragment of a folksong might be beautifully illuminated in its transformation or regeneration within a new modern context.

3. To Support Music Education

A broad education that fosters an appreciation of philosophy and the arts is fundamentally important in the development of a discerning and intelligent character, both that of an individual and that of a nation. Thus, it is fortunate that the study of music is widespread in Taiwan; the majority of Taiwanese children study at least one instrument. Most Taiwanese music teachers are perhaps overly concerned with their students' technical proficiency, as if studying music were only a matter of playing the notes and rhythm with precision. What Taiwanese students seem to lack is a heartfelt appreciation of art and music. These problems not only occur in Taiwan, but perhaps are more universal. In recognition of this potential area for improvement, the Wach School designs its programs with an eye toward deepening the personal experience of musical study. Their music courses emphasize drawing forth the potential artistry of children through cultivating their listening habits, enhancing their appreciation of music, and encouraging them to play with their own musical interpretation. The Wach School courses provide indigenous-music materials to complement and supplement Western-style pedagogies, ensuring that Taiwanese students will become familiar with Taiwanese composers' works, and perhaps, therefore, develop more of a taste for the music of their own country.

The Wach School also produces its own teaching materials. Its many publications include music-training courses for the beginner and the advanced student, the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* series, and other music composed by Formusica.[17] Moreover, the organization offers seminars for those who employ the teaching methods of the Wach School in order to counteract many teachers' lack of familiarity with the music of Taiwanese composers. The Wach School is thorough in its comprehensive support of Taiwan's heritage-based contemporary music.

To place Formusica accurately within its broad historical and international context, it is worth noting again here that Formusica founder, Professor Chen, along with his esteemed colleague Tsang-Houei Hsu, were founding members of the Asian Composers League. These Taiwanese artists have been enthusiastically involved in the development of new Asian music and have collaborated with international artists to ameliorate the decline of Asian's cultural heritage.

Young Taiwanese composers are also most certainly aware of other Asian composers' music created in the twentieth century. In one interview, Professor Chen recalled his experience of attending one of ACL's symposia. The impression he had of ACL composers in general is that they were all very dedicated and enthusiastic about the music of their own culture, and Chen wholly supports this phenomenon and the spirit behind it. He cited the composers of mainland China as

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[17] Other music-training books published by the Wach School of Music include:
*Diao shing shr chang jiao ben BK. I, II and II*I [Sightreading Exercises](Taipei, 1984).
Chiu diao yu jiue tzou shr chang jiao ben [Melodic and Rhythmic Sightreading Exercises] (Taipei,1984).
Ji chu jiue tzou jiao ben [Basic Rhythmic Exercises] (Taipei,1985).
Yue li jiau jan shou tse [Theory for University Examination] (Taipei, 1988).
Shr chang jiau jan shou tse [Sightreading for University Examination] (Taipei, 2000).
Yue li jiau jan shou tse II, [Theory for University Examination II] (Taipei, 2000).

an excellent example. In one memorable ACL conference held in New Zealand (Chen could not recall the exact year) the topic presented by mainland composers was "The composer is in the service of their people." Chen confesses that, at that time, Taiwanese composers felt puzzled by China's esthetic and moral values, and composers of the day from other countries found these incomprehensible as well.[18] Formusica composer Ching-Wen Chao, (now Associate Professor of Electronic Music in the Music Department at National Taipei Normal University) believes that mainland Chinese composers were on the right track and that their twentieth-century music may display even more indigenous Chinese influences than do the works of modern Taiwanese composers. She uses Chinese composer/conductor Tan Dun (b.1957) as an example. Although Tan Dun's music is well accepted by westerners, his music is deeply influenced by Peking opera and Nankuan music. These eastern elements are expressed easily and unselfconsciously in Dun's compositions.[19]

Another young Formusica composer, Wen-Pin Lee, received his DMA degree from Boston University in the United States and is also now an Associate Professor in the Music Department of National Taipei Normal University. Lee expressed, in a personal interview, his belief that the new music being composed in mainland China displays, in general, a deeply philosophical view of the world. In China, in addition to the more widespread musical traditions, each province also has its own

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[18] Chen, personal interview, 30 March 2006.

[19] Ching-Wen Chao, personal interview, 31 March 2006.
Peking opera of China is a national treasure with a history of 200 years. Peking opera is a synthesis of stylized action, singing, dialogue and mime, acrobatic fighting and dancing to represent a story or depict different characters and their feelings of gladness, anger, sorrow, happiness, surprise, fear and sadness.

indigenous folk music with unique local characteristics, providing diverse and plentiful sources of rich and meaningful material for Chinese composers.

In Lee's opinion, among the East-Asian countries, Korea has also made dramatic strides in promoting music, art, film and other cultural ventures. In recent years, Korea has organized numerous festivals for composers who are women. The number of Korean students studying abroad has increased, and the music of Korean composers is being performed more frequently in Western countries. [20]

For Taiwanese composers, who have received an orthodox Western-music education since the Japanese colonial period, the opportunity to become acquainted with traditional Peking opera or Nankuan music was diminished in comparison with mainland composers contributing to the serious decline in indigenous music that occurred in Taiwan.[21] Chou, in his article "Wenren and Culture," asserts that a society can flourish only if both "continuation" and "development" of their culture take place concurrently.[22] When the educational curriculum of an 'Eastern' country is established according to Western ideas, indigenous cultural creativity will remain at the level of borrowing from others, in which aspiration, inspiration, and realization are either Western or westernized.[23] Research and reorientation of education are thus crucial steps toward cultural revitalization and development.[24]

Professor Chen observes that, fortunately for Taiwan, Taiwanese composers have now freed themselves not only from reliance on only Western models, but also from older, constrained music-composition practices. These composers are

[20] Lee, personal interview, 3 April 2006.
[21] Chao, personal interview, 31 March 2006.
[22] Chou, "Wenren and Culture," 216.
[23] Chou 217.
[24] Chou.

absorbing contemporary music in earnest. The *New Taiwan Piano Works* is thus the result of the collision of West and East *and* old and new as expressed by native Taiwanese composers. This remarkable creation aims to inspire students and teachers alike to be aware of their own musical culture but within an international and historical context. Formusica will continue making efforts to improve native music education since it is at the foundation of and also is a most critical factor in the cultivation and assimilation of the arts and humanities in Taiwan.[25]

The Birth of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*

The *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* is a distinguished product of a genuinely pioneering project. It is a multifaceted accumulation of young Taiwanese composers' efforts, a representation of a variety of styles of Taiwanese contemporary music, and a pianistic curriculum that strongly conveys the concept of Taiwanese nationalism in music. *A Great Event,* by Long-Kwang Hsieh (b. 1943), for example, is a single-movement work inspired by the earthquake that occurred on September 21, 1999. *Temple Fair Suite,* by Fan-Ling Su (b. 1962), depicts Taiwanese festive scenes, and *Field Suite*, by Chin-Yow Lin (b. 1948), describes the rural countryside of Taiwan.

In the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*, Taiwanese composers also apply Chinese harmonies and melodies creatively within Western classical forms. *Double Fugue* of Chi-Hung Cheng (b. 1965) and *Invention,* by Heng-Chung Mo

[25] Chen, personal interview, 30 March 2006.

(b. 1965), are both composed in a style similar to that of J. S. Bach, and yet both pieces are distinctly Chinese in character.

In addition to providing artistic works for advanced students, the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* also includes short pieces for beginners. These works serve as stimulating and effective teaching tools. *Five Etudes* by Tung-Yu Su (b. 1967) incorporates study of the canon, thirds, legato playing, and exercises for finger independence. *Song of Joy* by Wan-Jen Hwang (b. 1970) is a study of syncopated rhythm, and *A Strange Man* written by Ching-Wen Chao (b. 1973) is an exercise in contrary motion.

The first volume of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*, published in 1994, is a compilation of sixteen original works by six different Taiwanese composers. It has proved to be a great success, attracting the attention of many musicians, piano teachers, and composers. Some pieces from the first book have been chosen as requirements in several piano competitions. Thanks to En Wang's vision and persistence, the National Piano Competition eventually added to its requirements the playing of a work by a Taiwanese composer.

Formusica and the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* have gradually gained recognition, but not to the complete satisfaction of its composers. Chen and his students knew that they had to be persistent and active to make musicians aware of their efforts; therefore, they gave concerts on a regular basis, promoting Taiwanese composers and introducing their music to the public. So far, more than one hundred compositions, large works as well as miniatures, have been premiered in concert and have been collected for publication in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* series.

For over ten years, the group has continued working on the project, publishing one book per year from 1994 to 1996 and three more between 1999 and 2000. The seventh volume was published in 2002 with the eighth volume expected on the market soon. Thus far, the entire collection of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* contains a total of one hundred thirty-six pieces (see Appendix 1). Composing piano works is only the beginning for Formusica writers. These artists hope to discover more indigenous music materials and to incorporate these into vocal and even chamber-music compositions.

It is the goal of Formusica that Taiwanese music students understand and appreciate the traditional musical language of their native land. Formusica proponents believe that the more Taiwanese students play the music of native composers, the more they can understand the depth of Taiwan's music. Chen and En Wang plan to recompile progressively, from easy to difficult, all the pieces collected in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* as in Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*. This effort will aid teachers in using the series more effectively as supplementary material to complement Western-style piano teaching methods.

Chapter II

Historical Features affecting the Music of Taiwan

To facilitate a better understanding of the spirit of Taiwanese music, it will be useful to begin with a brief summary of Taiwanese history. Taiwan is a heterogeneous and complex country culturally because of its particular geography and historical background. Diverse cultures have arisen from the aboriginal tribes and the Han-people, and from periods of Dutch and Japanese occupation.

In the middle part of the sixteenth century, there lived in Taiwan a small number of settlers from mainland China (the so-called Han immigrants) and also the Malaysian-Polynesian aborigines who had dwelt in Taiwan for many thousands of years. Although all of the aboriginal Taiwanese tribes were Malaysian-Polynesian in origin, they were not of the same race. They were in fact derived from nine Highland tribes and ten Pinpu tribes.[26] The great majority of Pinpu tribe members are now almost indistinguishable from the Han people as the Pinpu poeple have been assimilated by Han settlers through inter-marriage. While the Highland tribes still preserve their distinct languages, customs, and village social structures, they constitute only a minority of the Taiwanese population. All of the aborigines, with the exception of the Pinpu people, have been gradually squeezed off their land and forced to move toward the mountains, eventually becoming the "Mountaineers."[27]

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[26] Hsu 103.

[27] Shiau Feng Lee, *Guai Du Taiwan* [*A Quick Glance at Taiwan History*] (Taipei: Yu Shan, 2002) 11–13.

In the seventeenth century, Taiwan was invaded by the Dutch and became a Dutch colony from 1624 to 1661. Then, during the Ming Dynasty, General Chen Chen-Kung defeated the Dutch and ruled Taiwan from 1661 to 1683. After General Chen-Kung's death, Taiwan was occupied by the Ch'ing Dynasty and became a territory of mainland China from 1663 to 1895. During the war with Japan in 1895, the Ch'ing Dynasty signed the Treaty of Shimonoseke, under which Taiwan and the Pescadores were ceded to Japan by the Manchu government. Thus, the epoch of Japanese occupation began in 1895 and was ended in 1945. With its complicated historical background, the cultural development of Taiwan was inevitably affected and shaped by three major forces, the Chinese, the Dutch, and the Japanese.[28]

The Evolution of Music in Taiwan

Three categories of music exist in Taiwan. Besides aboriginal music and traditional Chinese folk music, there is Westernized new music, which has profoundly influenced the development of music in Taiwan. Western music was first introduced to Taiwan by Presbyterian missionaries during the invasion of the Dutch in 1624 but was no longer allowed after General Cheng Chen-Kung's defeat of the Dutch. The influence of Western music thus lasted for only approximately thirty years, and was mostly focused on religious music. It was not until nearly two hundred years later, in 1860, after China signed the Treaty of Tientsin, that Western music was disseminated in Taiwan once again.[29]

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[28] Ji-Dau Pan, *Taiwan De Li Shr* [*The History of Taiwan*] (Taipei: Yu Shan, 2004) 47–49.
[29] Bih-Jiuan Cheng 48–49.

From an historical point of view, Taiwan has always been in a politically unstable situation. Pianist Chen Yu-Shuo, the author of *Yinyue Taiwan (Music of Taiwan)*, writes that the most dramatic and meaningful changes occurred especially from 1895–1995 as a result of the Treaty of Shimonoseke.[30] Western music had been introduced to the Japanese as early as in 1542 by a Portuguese Christian missionary Francis Xavier, eighty-two years earlier than in Taiwan.[31] By 1872, the Japanese government had actively established music courses in all elementary schools of Japan that completely adopted a Western-style pedagogy. When Japan occupied Taiwan in 1895, the Japanese government then applied the same system for the music education of Taiwan's children. Subsequently, the Western-style music education was adopted in public schools and later elaborated through the return of professional Taiwanese musicians from Japan once the occupation ended. As the goal of the Japanese was to better control the Taiwanese people both physically and mentally, and to eradicate the Taiwanese people's own national consciousness, the Japanese strongly encouraged Taiwanese people to travel abroad to study in Japan. For those who were interested in pursuing advanced study in the field of music, Japan became the primary choice.[32] Not surprisingly, the development of Westernized new music in Taiwan was greatly affected by musicians trained in Japan. The style of these 'returned' Taiwanese musicians—known as the "First-Generation Composers" (born after 1910)—incorporating the training forged during the Japanese occupation until the

[30] Yu-Shou Chen, *Yinyue Taiwan* [*Taiwanese Music*] (Taipei: China Times, 1996) 25.
[31] Cheng 54.
[32] Cheng 53.

end of World War II. These composers adopted the functional harmony of the Western tonal system as the basis of their works but also incorporated into their compositions native Taiwanese melody. In this way, the First-Generation Composers interwove the strands of two distinct cultures into a musical fabric uniquely characteristic of Taiwan.

Unlike the First-Generation Composers, the "Second-Generation Composers" (born after 1925) studied in Europe rather than in Japan. In Europe, they learned Western twentieth-century compositional techniques first-hand rather than through Japanese interpretation, and employed devices such as non-tonal harmonies to highlight the harmonic colors in their works. The influences of Debussy and Bartók are especially evident in the compositions of the Second Generation composers. As a whole, Western music, through its transplantation and cultivation during the century or so since 1895, eventually took root in Taiwan and profoundly affected native composers.[33]

For the Third-Generation composers (born after 1950), the choice of destination in pursuing professional musical training was no longer limited to Japan and Europe. Musicians had become more open-minded in choosing the schools they would attend and the teachers with whom they would study. The music of the Third Generation thus reveals diverse musical influences from the Western world.[34]

The number of female composers has also increased during the time of the Third Generation. Young Taiwanese female composers have participated actively in international competitions and festivals in the twentieth and twentieth-first

[33] Hsu 107–110.
[34] Hsu.

centuries. Yujen Chen Tobita, in her doctoral dissertation entitled *Historical Background and Pedagogical Analysis of Piano Works By Selected Taiwanese Women*, addresses the various roles played by Taiwanese women in the development of Western art music in Taiwan from political, cultural, and economical viewpoints. Her paper also includes a pedagogical study of piano solo works by selected Taiwanese women. Interestingly, Tobita provides a detailed discussion of the education of Taiwanese women during the Japanese colonial period. According to Tobita, Western art music was first introduced to Taiwanese girls through the Japanese school system. Although Taiwanese girls were legally allowed to receive an education, in reality, after 1895, the percentage of girls graduating from school was extremely low due to a variety of social reasons.[35] Tobita asserts that Western missionaries also played a significant role in developing Taiwanese musicians. In their schools and churches, they helped nurture the first generation of Taiwanese female musicians (those who received professional music training in Japan and then returned to Taiwan as teachers and performers). Tobita discusses significant contributions made by several important first-generation Taiwanese female musicians both in the development of Western music and in their influence on the second-generation Taiwanese women composers. The main distinction between Taiwanese women musician of the first and the second generations was that those of the second generation began to compose their own pieces and became actively involved in concerts and music education. Tobita examines several prominent Taiwanese female composers and their music in the

[35] Yujen Chen Tobita, *Historical Background and Pedagogical Analysis of Piano Works by Selected Taiwanese Women,* Ph. D. diss. Texas Tech University, 2004, 29.

second part of her dissertation. She also explores their compositional techniques and style, and how they integrated Western and Eastern elements in their works. The author describes how the Taiwanese elements from which these composers drew can be divided into six categories: 1) religious references; 2) references to celebrations and ceremonial dances which took place during cultural festivals in Taiwan; 3) the adaptation of traditional Taiwanese folk tunes (first collected by a group of Taiwanese composers' during the mid-1960s); 4) references to Chinese poetry, literature, or classic tales; 5) the adaptation of traditional Chinese musical instruments into a Western medium; and 6) the conscious integration of Chinese instruments.[36]

Tobita also explores musical works written by two significant Taiwanese women, Shih-Hui Chen and Fan-Ling Su. In particular, Fan-Ling Su is a member of Formusica organization, and her *Dragon and Lion Dances* and *Temple Festival Suite* will be discussed in my dissertation in detail (they are also addressed in Chapter 6 of Tobita's paper). Fan-Ling Su received her academic degree from Konservatorium der Stadt Wien and earned the diploma of Musical Theory and Composition with Excellence from the *Hochschule fuer Musik und Darstellende Kunst* in Wien. One of her orchestral works, *Ba-Gua,* won first prize in the composition competition sponsored by Komponisten-Bund Austria and the Konservatorium der Stadt Wien.[37]

[36] Tobita 94–97.
[37] Fan-Ling Su, *Temple Festival Suite* (1999).

Tobita's research demonstrates that Taiwanese folk materials can be elegantly incorporated into instructional piano pieces and that Taiwanese women have been as successful as men in the composition of such pedagogical works.

Although aboriginal people were the first inhabitants of what was to become Taiwan, they account for only a small percentage of the current population. Perhaps this, combined with geographical factors, explains why aboriginal music has never spread or intermingled with the music of the Han people. After rapid growth in the population of the Han people, compared with that of the aborigines, Chinese-based music inevitably became the mainstream in Taiwan.[38]

Currently, native composers incorporate the Han-people's folk music, developed during the past one hundred years, as source material in modern compositions in combination with Western techniques and traditions. Thus, the synthesis of Eastern and Western music has become the main compositional matrix for creating the new Taiwanese music of the twenty-first century.

Taiwan has no official status as an independent nation, but her people have gradually developed their own style of living which is very different from that of China. The differentiation from a political point of view is clear. There are multiple political parties in Taiwan while only one party, the Communist Party, dominates the government of China. People who live in Taiwan exercise freedom of speech, freedom of enterprise, freedom of the press, and, most importantly, the freedom to vote for their desired president. In China, these freedoms are seriously curtailed and controlled by a centralized government. One must keep in mind however, that

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[38] Shang-Ren Jean, *Taiwan min yau* [Taiwan Folk Songs] (Taipei: Jung-Wen, 1992) 5–6.

although Taiwan and China are politically different, the basic foundations for art, poetry and music are shared by both countries. Students in Taiwan are required to study ancient Chinese poetry beginning in elementary school. Not only are the theories of pentatonic scales and modes studied, but also, ancient Chinese instruments are introduced to every student through their elementary-school music textbooks. Few schools provide special classes for students who study Western instruments seriously, and these students, besides studying their primary instrument, are required in the ninth grade to learn to play an ancient Chinese instrument (referred to as the *GuoYue*) in order to play *Nankuan* music. Through these means, China's cultural and musical roots are embedded in the Taiwanese cultural identity.

For Taiwanese listeners, Taiwanese modern music does in fact have a distinctive quality. For example, a recognizable native folk rhythm from ceremonial festivals is introduced in the very beginning in the musical work *Dragon and Lion Dances* by Fan-Ling Su. Ancient folk tunes, re-articulated by living composers using modern compositional techniques, have also become part of the new musical expression of the contemporary Taiwanese. Chi-Hung Cheng's *Chinese Double Fugue*, taking the theme from Su-Wu-Mu-Yan as its melodic subject, provides an excellent example of adapting an ancient folk tune within a modern composition. Taiwanese culture is also the accumulation of the country's own distinct history, geographic environment, and customs. Thus, I believe inhabitants of the Taiwan region have also naturally developed their own musical language and culture historically and continue to do so.

Chapter III

Chinese Modes and Scales in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*

For most of history, Chinese music was little known in the Western world. In fact, Western composers have known about Chinese scales and modes only for a relatively short time. Some of the works of Claude Debussy (1862–1918) for example, were among the first Western compositions to be inspired by Asian harmony. Although the composer was already an independent-minded pianist and had his own ideas about harmony and music theory, Debussy's imagination was further fed at the 1889 Paris Exposition. Here, he first heard the Javanese gamelan.[39] Debussy's subsequent piano work *"Pagodes"* from *Estampes* (1903) exhibited strong influences of Asian music, and his incorporation of Oriental characteristics within his compositions profoundly affected his successors.

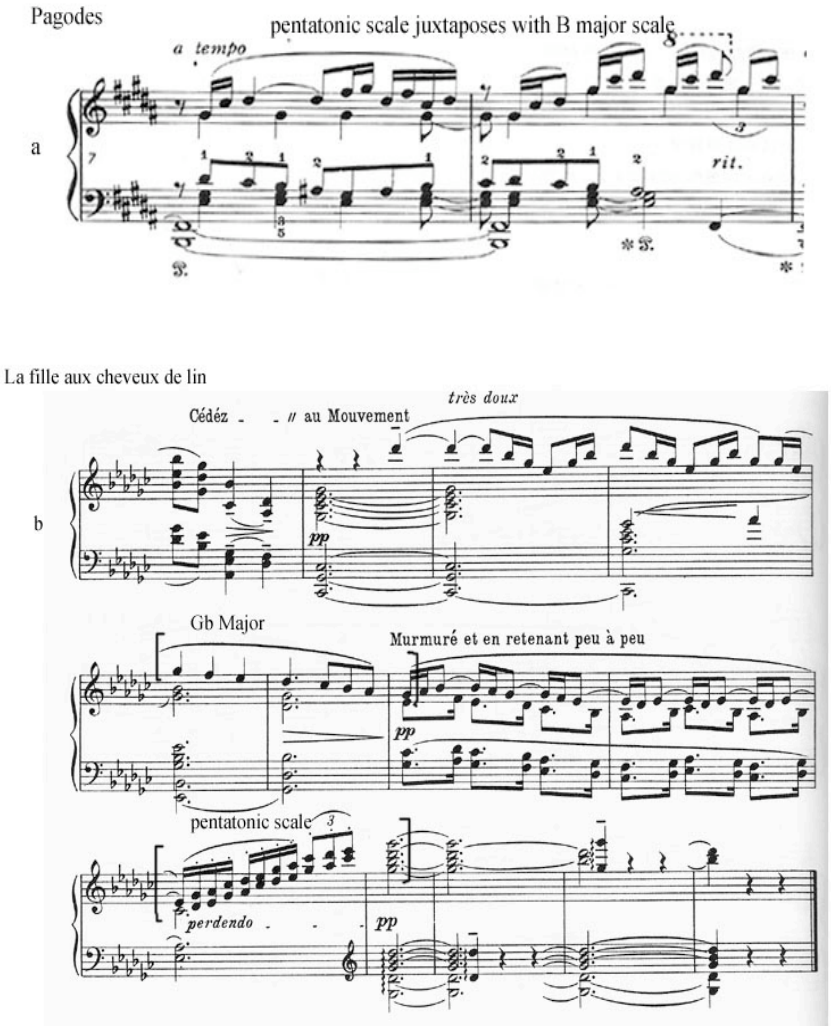
In a personal interview, I asked Formusica composer Ching-Wen Chao, to discuss her impression of Debussy's use of "exotic" and Eastern elements. According to Chao, when Debussy composed, he combined the pentatonic scale with other types of scales. This is illustrated in his piano composition *Pagodes*, a well known piece by Debussy in which he incorporates "Oriental" elements. The recurrence of the pentatonic themes interwoven with various musical devices is often the main focus for musical analysis of this work. As I played through the

[39] "Debussy, Achille-Claude," *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music* (New York: Oxford UP, 1996) 186.

music, I found that in *Pagodes* Debussy not only used one pentatonic scale, he also combined it with other types of scales. As seen in Example 3-1a, Debussy constructed the right-hand melody on the pentatonic scale on B (B-C♯-D♯-F♯-G♯) and that melody is juxtaposed with the Western B-major scale in the left hand to generate a unique sonority. In another piano work by Debussy, *La fille aux cheveux de lin* (from *Preludes, Book I*), I found, similarly, that Debussy combines the Western G♭-major scale with the pentatonic scale built on G♭ (C♭-D♭-E♭-G♭-A♭) (Example 3-1b).[40]

[40] Claude Debussy, *Complete Preludes, Books I and II*. (New York: Dover, 1989).

Example 3-1: The Use of Different Types of Scales in Debussy's Music



Thus, one may come to the conclusion that the pervasive appearances of fourth and/or fifth intervals in Debussy's music are influenced by the Chinese pentatonic scale. Chao believes that Debussy was looking for a completely primitive harmonic resonance which could not be found in any Western music that preceded him. It seems also possible that Debussy might have designed his music to embody an

"Oriental" flavor using the overtones series.[41] Professor Lee's point of view however, also expressed in an interview, is that the European composers who have incorporated Eastern elements in their works were simply striving for an expression of exoticism.[42] Both composers interviewed expressed the opinion that explicating Debussy's or another composer's style, however, would require substantial scholarly study that is outside the scope of this paper.

Professor Chen asserts that the use of "exotic" elements by twentieth-century European composers is part of the process of the general transition in harmonic language in European art music from Medieval church modes to the functional harmonies found in the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods and on to the atonality and non-functional harmony explored in the twentieth century and the present day. From his point of view, the slow expansion and enrichment of European music to incorporate East Asia's or other pacific countries' cultures has been an inevitable and natural development.[43] This cultural exchange will no doubt continue to be an important process in the future of music making. In Wen-Chung Chou's Keynote Lecture, he stated: "…in recent decades the pace of cultural change has been increasing, and the scope of it has become not only broader, but deeper."[44]

Still, when Western composers endeavor to create an Oriental mood in their music, they most generally base their melodies simply on pentatonic scales. Chinese music, however, is not encapsulated in nor defined by the pentatonic scale. The modes and scales—both five-tone and seven-tone—of Chinese music comprise

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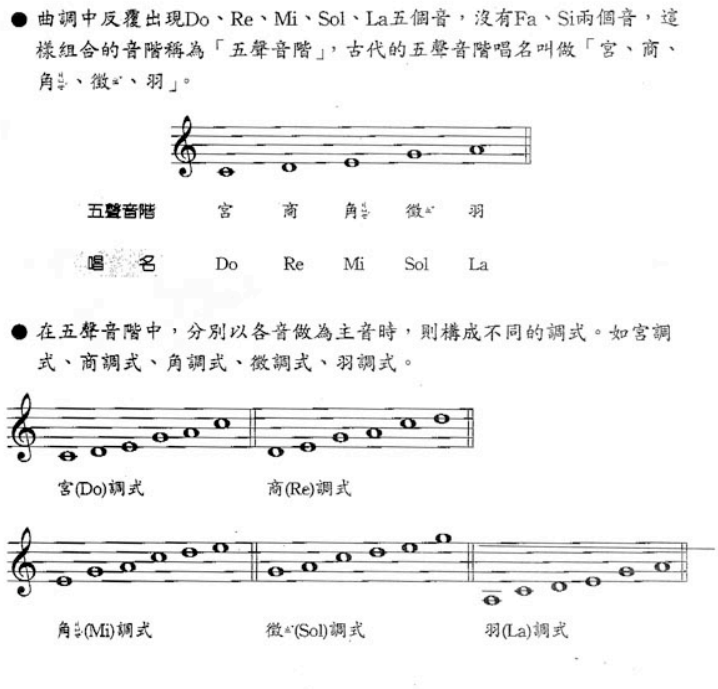
[41] Ching-Wen Chao, personal interview, 31 March 2006.
[42] Wen-Pin Lee, personal interview, 3 April 2006.
[43] Mao-Shuen Chen, personal interview, 30 March 2006.
[44] Chou, "Beyond Identity."

a system that has been in existence since ancient times and is far more complicated than Westerners usually acknowledge.

Among the various elements that determine the musical characteristics of a nation, specific modes and scales are among the important. All Chinese music, including Taiwanese music, uses certain five-tone, six-tone, and seven-tone scales. These are as natural to Taiwanese composers as are typical major and minor keys to Western composers. The principle theory of pentatonic scales is taught in the elementary schools in Taiwan. Taiwanese students, in general, are taught the five basic modes of the pentatonic scale in the fifth and sixth grades. Currently, elementary schools choose their own music textbooks. Thus, the editions vary. I have chosen for comparison two different editions of music textbooks used in Taiwan. One textbook (see Example 3-2) shows the pentatonic scale in C *Gong* mode along with the five different modes depicted below. This edition does not give any musical examples for the students to sing and thus to experience for themselves the effect of the pentatonic melodies.[45]

[45] Shu-Ching Chou, ed., *Art and Culture* (Taipei: Kan Shuen, 2005), 9.

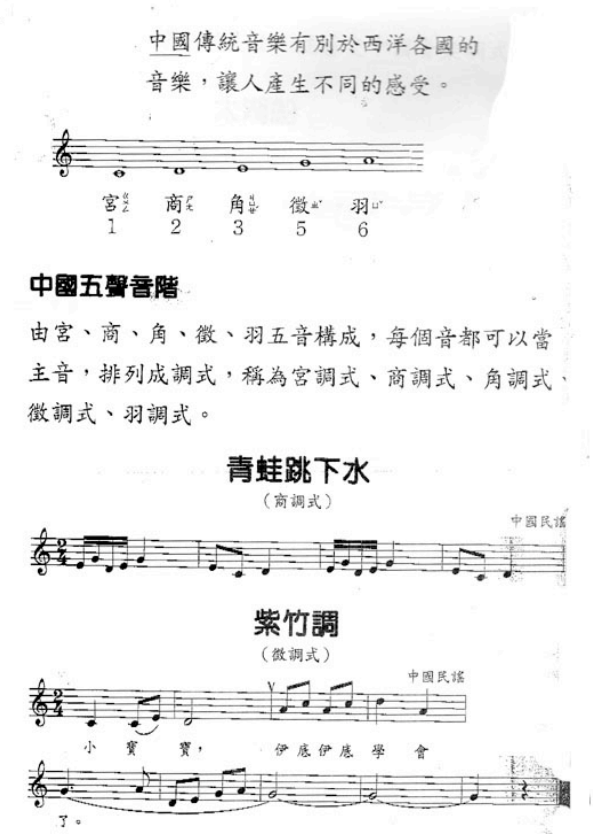
Example 3-2: The Pentatonic Scale as Introduced in an Elementary-School Music Textbook.



A second textbook (Example 3-3) shows the pentatonic scale in C *Gong* mode along with the scale degree of each pitch. This edition does not display all the scales of five modes. Rather, textual explanations are provided (Example 3-3). According to elementary music teacher Hui-Jing Chao, young students are often confused by this textual presentation.[46] Unlike the first edition however, this edition provides two excerpts of folk songs composed on the pentatonic scale (in D *Shang* and G *Zhi* mode) so that students may sing and experience the resonance of these Chinese melodies.[47]

[46] Hui-Jing Chao, telephone interview, 31 March 2006.
[47] Wang-Ru Wu, ed., *Art and Culture* (Taichung: Ren Wen, 2003) 26.

Example 3-3: The Pentatonic Scale as Introduced in a Second Elementary-School Textbook.



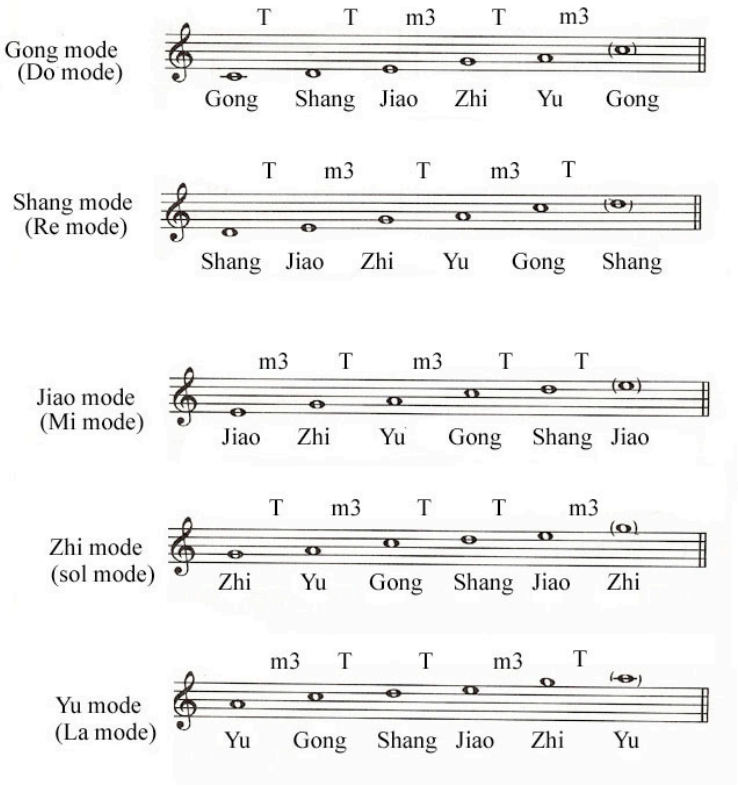
Notice that the hexatonic and heptatonic scales are not mentioned at all and that the pentatonic scale is allowed only about one page in these textbooks. As one can see, the theory is taught in a very skeletal manner. Those who attend advanced music classes and specialize in music learn how to generate hexatonic and heptatonic scales from the pentatonic scales. In my memory, we never studied thoroughly any music written by native composers that was based on pentatonic scales. Thus, native students (even students attending specialized musical classes) know very

little about the characteristics and functions of the pentatonic scales. The music education most native students receive is focused on Western music and theory, as I described in Chapter I.

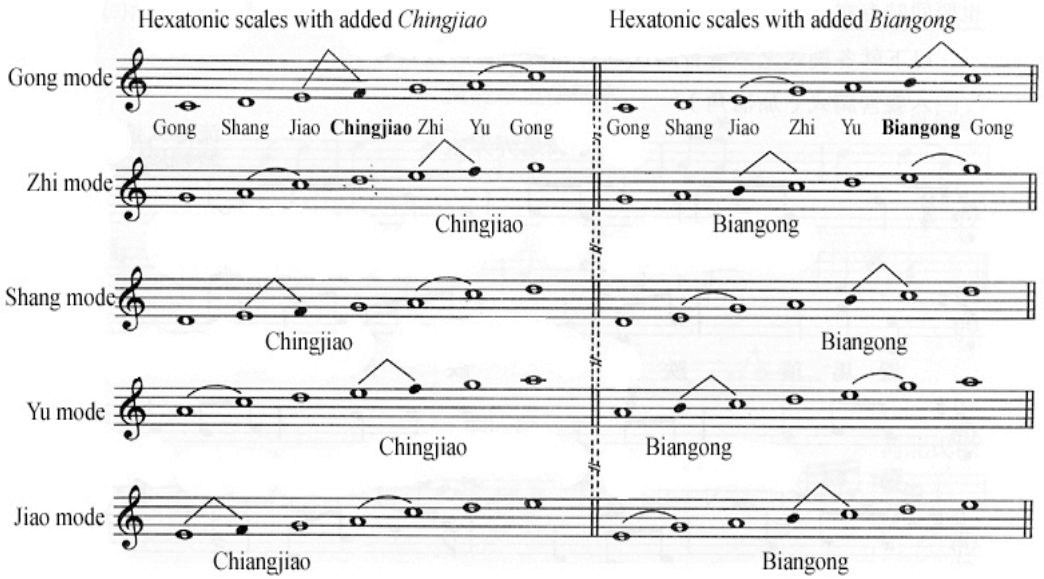
An excellent article written by Lu-Ting Ho, *On Chinese Scales and National Modes,* has provided Western readers with information on Chinese folk music, including the outline of modes shown in Example 3-4.[48] The Chinese base their compositions on the *wesheng*, *liusheng*, and *gisheng yinjie* scales. These terms denote five-tone (pentatonic), six-tone (hexatonic), and seven-tone (heptatonic) scales, respectively—the number of tones refers to the fixed number of pitches contained within an octave. Both six-tone and seven-tone scales have evolved from the five-tone scale, and each of the categories has several modes. There are five modes of five-tone scales, ten modes of six-tone scales, and twenty-one modes of seven-tone scales (Examples 3-4, 3-5, and 3-6).

[48]Lu-Ting Ho, "On Chinese Scales and National Modes," *Asian Music* 14/1 (1983): 132. This article was first published in China in *Wenhua Bao* on December 6 and 7, 1961.

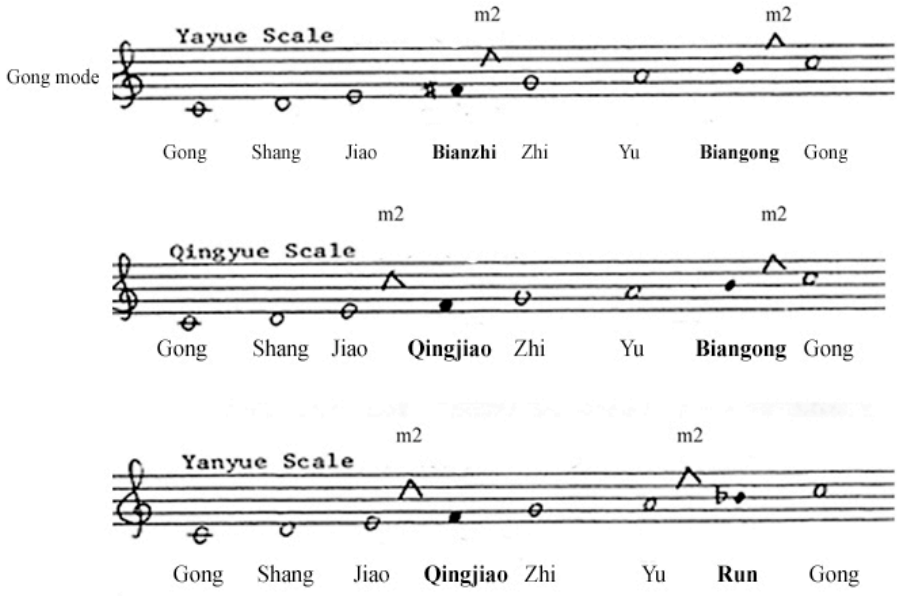
Example 3-4: The Five Modes of Pentatonic Scales



Example 3-5: Ten Modes of Six-Tone Scales, with Added Tones



Example 3-6: Seven-Tone Scales, *Gong* mode, with Added Tones



In Examples 3-5 and 3-6, one can see that in addition to the five pentatonic modes there are pentatonic scales with added notes to form hexatonic and heptatonic scales with different names. The hexatonic scale is developed from the pentatonic scale by adding a pitch *Chingjiao*, it is placed a minor second above *Jiao* (between *Jiao* and *Zhi*), or *Biangong* which is placed a minor second below *Gong* (between *Yu* and *Gong*). Thus, every hexatonic scale will contain a minor second. Heptatonic scales are categorized as *Yanyue*, *Qingyue*, or *Yayue*. A heptatonic scale contains two added tones. These two added notes naturally create the two minor second intervals that have become a recognizable aural characteristic of the heptatonic scale.[49] The added tones are less important in the scale. They are more ornamental in nature and are often used as auxiliary notes in a piece of music. There are

[49] Ming-Huei Lin, *Jung guo yin yue chuang tzuo de shin fang shiang* (Kaoshiung: Fu Wen, 1992) 46.
Lu-Ting Ho, "On Chinese Scales and National Modes," *Asian Music* 14/1 (1983): 134.

specific rules to follow when converting a pentatonic scale to a heptatonic scale. For *Yayue* scales, the added tones *Bianzhi* and *Biangong* are placed a minor second below *Zhi* and *Gong,* and the half-step intervals in the *Yayue* scale (*Gong* mode) must occur between scale degrees 4 and 5 and scale degrees 7 and 8. In the *Qingyue* scale, the added tone *Qingjiao* is placed a minor second above *Jiao,* and *Biangong* is placed a minor-second below *Gong*, and the half steps are between scale degrees 3 and 4 and scale degrees 7 and 8. In the *Yanyue* scale the added tones *Qingjiao* and *Run* are placed a minor-second above *Jiao* and *Yu*, and the half steps are found between scale degrees 3 and 4 and scale degrees 6 and 7.[50] The particular placement of the half steps creates the F#, B♭, F, and B pitches. Chinese musicologists have discovered that in the history of Chinese music making, music composed for the Emperor is more likely to be based on the flat-pitched *Yanyue* scale while folksongs are more often composed with the sharp-pitched *Yayue* scale.[51] As seen in the examples to follow, Formusica composers switch creatively when necessary between *Yanyue* and *Yayue* scales or to different modes to achieve desired effects. When I interviewed composer Chen, he was very kind to show me various ways of using pentatonic scales in his musical works. Their explanations of pentatonic scales were extremely valuable and significant in this project. Information on the birth year of individual composers mentioned in this paper is provided in Appendix II.

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[50] Lin 55.

[51] Mao-Shuen Chen, personal interview, 27 October 2004.

The Harmonic and Melodic Characteristics of Chinese Scales

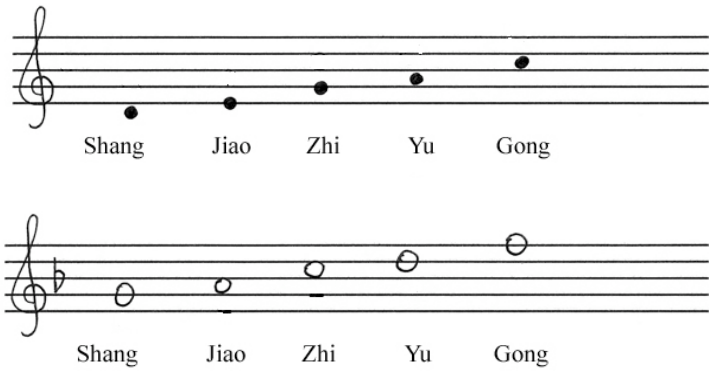
The spirit of Taiwanese music is best expressed by its own scale system—that of the pentatonic scale. Use of this scale has become one of the most important musical characteristics in many contemporary native composers' works. This section will briefly summarize the musical characteristics of the pentatonic scale with regard to its harmonic and melodic significance. The pentatonic scale contains five fixed pitches, and each pitch is identified by a specific Chinese name: *Gong*, *Shang*, *Jiao*, *Zhi*, and *Yu* (see Example 3-4, *Gong* mode). Each fixed pitch also represents a specific mode (Example 3-4). A piece of piano music based on the pentatonic scale can be written in any of these modes. Theoretically, each pitch is equally important in the pentatonic scale. Thus, the pitches are not differentiated functionally. When listening to a piece composed using a pentatonic scale however, there is still one note perceived as the 'tonic,' and the feeling of a particular mode can be recognized quite easily.

In my experience, a Western key signature may be adapted to use of the pentatonic scale to indicate the *Gong.* Consider, for example, a piece that is based upon a G pentatonic scale in the *Shang* mode (G, A, C, D, and F). Although the first pitch of the scale is G, the key signature is going to include one flat (B♭) since F is the *Gong* in this particular mode. The note B♭ will not be incorporated in the music, however. In Mao-Shuen Chen's *Hopscotch,* the note E♭ does not appear in the piece although it is specified in the key signature. Similarly, in Wey-Ming Yen's *Happy New Year*, the F♯ in the key signature indicates that the composition is written using

the G pentatonic scale in the *Gong* mode, but the note F# does not appear in the music at all. I have asked many composers why they use a Western key signature in this manner, but, unfortunately, they are not able to give me a satisfying answer.

In Chinese modes, as in Western modes, it is the intervallic relationship between scale degrees that one needs to follow when starting a mode on a specific pitch. Example 3-7 demonstrates the process of transposition; the notes in black-head indicate the original pentatonic scale in *Shang* mode and the notes in white-head indicate the G pentatonic scale in *Shang* mode. The *Gong* now is placed at the very end of the scale, but it still determines the key signature of the scale. Knowing the position of the *Gong* in the scale helps with transposition. For those who are not familiar with the pentatonic scale system, it is also correct to begin the scale with the *Gong* and rotate the pitches of that scale according to the needs of the music of interest.[52]

Example 3-7: Pentatonic Scale in *Shang* Mode in Two Transpositions

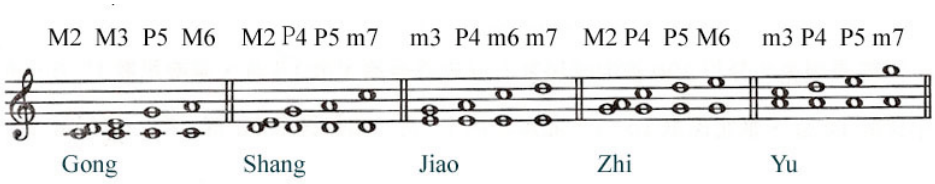


In contrast with Western harmonic scales, the pentatonic modes like the black-key pentatonic scale on the piano do not contain intervals of minor and augmented

[52] Chen.

seconds (as are found in Western scales). The intervals of the *Gong* mode in the pentatonic scale are major second, major second, minor third, major second, and minor third. As shown in Example 3-8 however, if the scale pitches unite with one another in the pentatonic scale, the following intervals are formed.[53] I have checked that the exact same intervals will be achieved in their inverted form.

Example 3-8: Intervals Between Scale Pitches of Pentatonic Scales

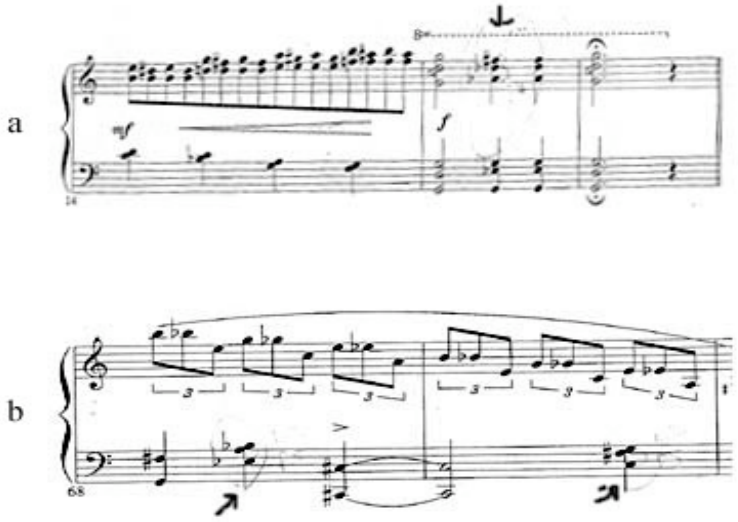


As demonstrated in Example 3-8, dissonant intervals found in western harmonic scales, such as the minor second, major seventh, and augmented and diminished intervals, do not exist in the pentatonic scales. The Western scale forms seven triads structurally while the pentatonic scale forms only two triads. Taking the C pentatonic scale in the *Gong* mode as an example, it generates a C major triad and an A minor triad. Nevertheless, native composers have created their own chords in accordance with the nature and the characteristics of the pentatonic scale system. Chords comprised of perfect fifths and fourths are often incorporated into these composers' works. Various combinations of fifths and fourths appear in many of the works I will discuss in later chapters. For example, the last chord in *Hopscotch* is made up of two perfect fifths. A chord of two perfect fifths occurs also in Chi-

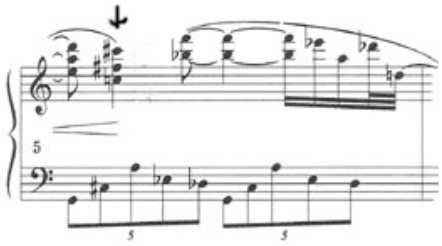
[53] Lin 22.

Hung Cheng's *Listening to Rain*, in measure 16 in the right hand. Chords formed by fourths can be found easily in Chin-Yow Lin's *Ox-Cart* from measures 41 to 43 as well as in *Battles on Horse back* by Mao-Shuen Chen who uses series of fourths (though not necessarily perfect fourths). Dissonances can also be added to some of the chords built of fourths and fifths. This serves to provide distinctive harmonies for the music, and native composers often use dissonances when they compose in a contemporary style. In Chi-Hung Cheng's *Listening to Rain*, he combines a perfect fourth with an augmented third above in measure 15 in the right hand to create a striking dissonant harmony (Example 3-9a). Chords made up of a perfect fifth with a minor second above are seen in the left hand in measures 68 and 69 (Example 3-9b). A different combination can be found in Chin-Yow Lin's *Imagery "Five"*, collected in the seventh volume. In measure 5, he uses a chord made up of a perfect fifth with an augmented fourth below (Example 3-10). The fourth could also combine inside or outside of a fifth. Based on my analysis, I found that the chords formed by stacks of fourths are much more common than stacked fifths. Chords made up of major seconds, inside or outside a fourth or fifth, which create a gentle but dissonant harmony lending a special color to the music, are also a popular choice, for example in *Listening to Rain*.

Example 3-9, a and b: Dissonances Added to Fourth and Fifth Intervals in *Listening to Rain*.



Example 3-10: Dissonance Added to the Fifth Interval in *Imagery "Five"*.



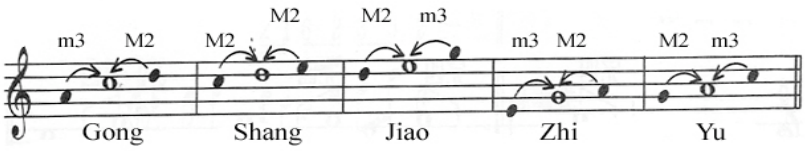
Wen-Chung Choa in his article *Wenren and Culture* imparts to the reader what he had learned from Bartók concerning the study of the music from a different culture:

> He also reminds us that, in studying non-Western music, one must consider the character and tradition of one's culture as well as all the inherent qualities of the material itself, because not all of the are perceptible or definable according to Western concepts.[54]

[54] Wen-Chung Chou, "Wenren and Culture," 211.

In the Western key of C major, the leading-tone, B, is usually expected to resolve to the tonic, C, for tension release. The interval between the leading tone and the tonic in the Western scale system is a half-step. The concept of the leading-tone, however, does not exist in the Chinese scale system. Each scale pitch in the Chinese scale is equally important. The most natural progression is more from one of the two pitches located just above or below a particular pitch in the scale (such as Gong, Shang, or Jiao) to that specific pitch for resolution.[55] The distance between the specific pitch and the notes located above or below is either a major second or a minor third. This constitutes a significant divergence from a Western approach to harmony (Example 3-11).[56]

Example 3-11: Natural Resolutions in the Pentatonic Scale

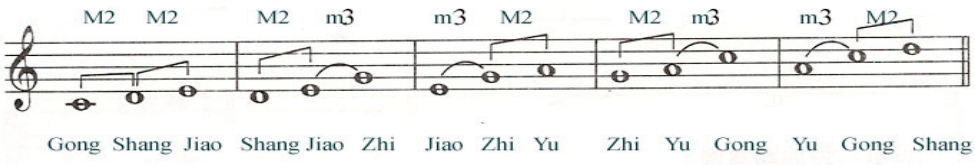


The melodic lyricism (which appears in examples to be discussed later) is another characteristic feature of Taiwanese music. In general, the most natural melodic progressions in the pentatonic scale are the combination of the major second and the minor third.[57] Taking any three successive scale pitches from the

[55] Lin 81.
[56] Lin 26.
[57] Lin 24.

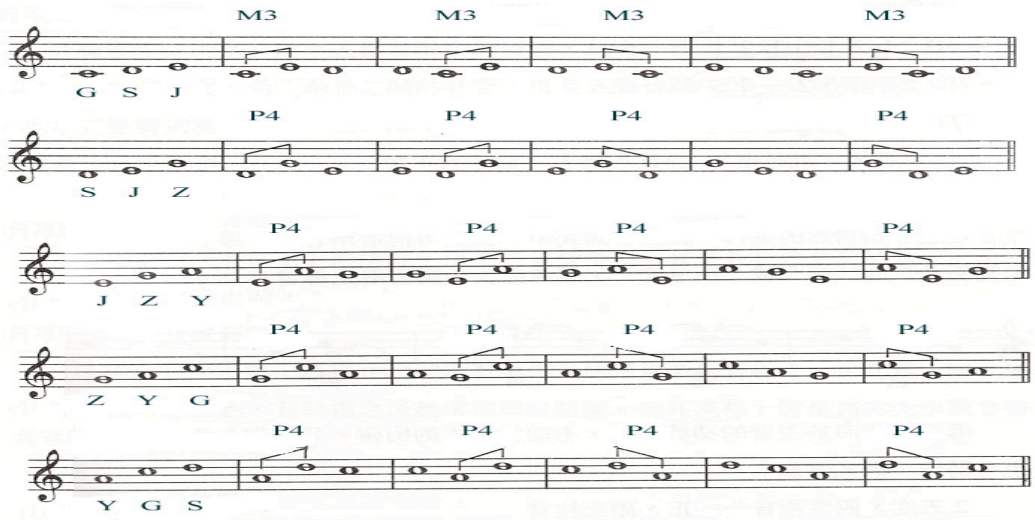
pentatonic scale, one finds that the only contiguous intervals are the various combinations of major seconds and minor thirds (Example 3-12).

Example 3-12: The Intervals Between Successive Scale Pitches



If these two intervals are found too often in the melody, the music will sound monotonous and overly tame. Changing the order of the three successive scale pitches, however, produces six more possible combinations, adding variety to the tonal palate. Besides the intervals of the major second and the minor third, one may achieve two new intervals, the major third and the perfect fourth (Example 3-13), which are not produced by successive notes in the basic scale but by the first and third pitches of a group of three successive pitches in the scale.

Example 3-13: Variety Achieved through Changing the Order of Successive Scale Pitches



After examining all the intervals in the pentatonic scales and the variety achieved through uniting pitches with one another and changing the order of successive pitches, we have come to find that the most frequently appearing intervals in works based on pentatonic scales are the major second, minor third, perfect fourth, and major third. In the melody of *Springtime Frolic* by Long-Kwang Hsieh, for example, the melodic phrase found in measures 1 to 4 are formed by the intervals of the major second interweaving with minor thirds and perfect fourths. The following musical examples will serve to further demonstrate how different native composers approach the incorporation of Chinese scales in their works.

Mao-Shuen Chen,
Three works from Volume 7:

Hopscotch, *Stilt Walking*, and *Battles on Horse Back* (2000)

Mao-Shuen Chen's three short pieces are inspired by three long-time favorite children's pastimes in China. Stilt-walking in particular is often still seen at traditional Taiwanese festivities. These piano works, are worth studying for their novel combination of Western rhythms and Eastern scales. The short pieces display Taiwanese musical features along with surprising Western jazz elements, and the syncopation found in the works imbues them with rhythmic energy. Through these pieces, Chen demonstrates that diverse characteristics, if used intelligently, can create an unexpected and delightful musical effect. Perhaps seemingly unsophisticated at first glance, these compositions contain many details and are quite challenging, both technically and artistically. These pieces are specifically written for children; therefore, the tempo is variable in accordance with students' levels and ability.[58]

Hopscotch

Hopscotch is a children's game with many variations in which a player tosses a flat stone or similar object consecutively into the numbered spaces of a pattern of rectangles outlined on the ground and then hops or jumps through the spaces to retrieve the object. When children play the game, they move forward and backward

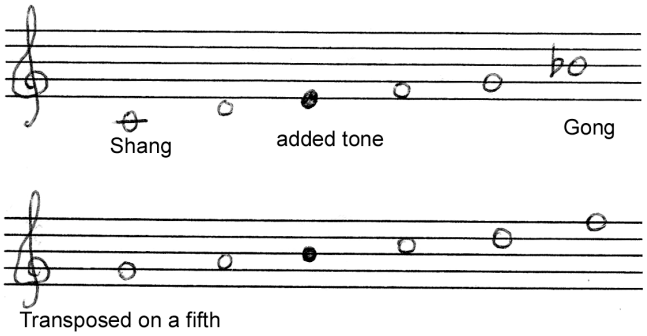
[58]This chapter begins to discuss actual pieces. In order to follow the analysis, it will be helpful if readers have access to the scores of the *New Taiwan* series.

over the fixed grid and avoid stepping on lines. Chen's music creatively expresses the analogy of hopscotch through its melodic contours and modal shifts.

The melody in *Hopscotch* (2000) is constructed on a C pentatonic scale in the *Shang* mode with an added tone E (C-D-E-F-G-B♭-C), and the fragment appearances of perfect fourths and fifths in the music are derived from the scale. Notice that the gong in *Shang* mode is B♭. This determines the key signature of the piece though, as stated previously, the note E♭ is never found in the music. The melody of *Hopscotch* is composed in a four-bar phrase. The first phrase begins in measure 1 and the second phrase takes over in measure 5. In the second phrase, the scale is transposed up a fifth to the G pentatonic scale in the *Shang* mode with an added tone B (G-A-B-C-D-F-G). The melody returns to its original scale setting in measure 9 (Example 3-14). Chen intentionally uses this clever melodic analogy to correspond to the forward and backward motion of the game of hopscotch. As seen in measures 5 to 7, the melody in the right hand descends from G5 to C4, then, after a short pause, the music ascends from F3 to C5 in a clear forward direction.[59] This constant feeling of the melody moving forward and back, along with the composers' two-note phrasing, effectively evokes the scene of children hopping back and forth on the hopscotch grid.

[59] There are several systems musicians may use to specify different pitch classes. The pitch-designation system I am using here refers to middle C as "C4." The C an octave above "C4" is "C5." An octave below is "C3." The note just above "C4" is "D4." The white-key note above that is "E4"and so on. The note just below "C4" is "B3" (it belongs to the octave below).
Robert J. Frank, "Theory on the Web," 5 March 2006 <http://www.smu.edu/totw/pitch.htm>.

Example 3-14: The Pentatonic Scale in *Shang* Mode with Added Tones.



In this piece, Chen phrases melodies in the right and left hands very differently. The right hand is organized in four-measure phrases, starting from the third beat of measures 1, 5, 9, and 13. The right-hand line is extremely fragmented (but essentially *legato,* with many four-note slurs). In contrast, while the left-hand line has more *staccato* eighth-notes, the longest phrases, also, are found in the left hand, for example in measures 2–4, 9–10, and 13–16. The irregular slurs and the shifts between *staccato* notes and non-*staccato* notes pose a challenge to the pianist. Note also how Chen uses distinct articulation to differentiate similar rhythmic figures. In measures 1 and 7, for example, the second beats are played with very different articulation; in measure 1 the figure is slurred with a *staccato* indication; in measure 7 there is no *staccato* marked. Chen cleverly creates simultaneous accents on the weak beats through the use of tied eighth notes, two-note groupings, and syncopations. This is seen in measure 8, where the left hand has two sets of syncopations, while the right hand has two two-note groupings followed by a four-note group. This carefully crafted phrasing will result in a left-hand accent on the

first eighth notes (pitches D and F) of each syncopated figure. In the right hand, the first note of each slur (pitches G, C, and G) will be slightly stressed. Notice the latter two pitches both occur on upbeats. Thus, the student is compelled to work on coordination in order to bring out the intended asymmetrical phrasing, just as a young child is similarly challenged in mastering the multifaceted and enjoyable game of hopscotch.

The composer uses *staccato* notes as a musical gesture to portray the jumping action when playing hopscotch. At the end, to have both hands playing different notes, yet in rhythmical unison, indicates that the children have finished the game.

Stilt Walking

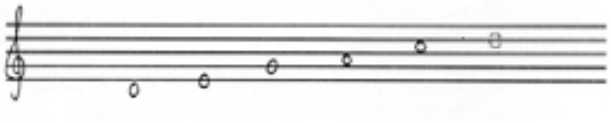
Single *staccato* notes and abrupt rests lend a disconnected and pointed character to this second of Chen's delightful study pieces. The composer sets the 2/2 meter in a fairly last tempo, and expects the student to play up to tempo and follow the accents and *staccato* marks carefully in order to express the playful character of this work.[60] The idiom of jazz is reflected in the rhythm. The composer purposefully places all of the accents on the second eighth note of the second beat in measures 1–8 and measures 16–19, clearly implying a 3+3+2 subdivision. Syncopated rhythm in the right hand in measures 11 and 12 and a scattering of "Scotch snap" rhythm portrays the stilt walker's tottering body.

Example 3-15 illustrates the Chinese scales used in *Stilt Walking*. The melody is presented as a four-bar phrase constructed on the D and C pentatonic scales in

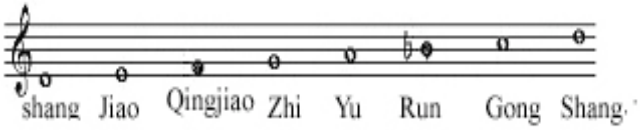
[60] Chen, personal interview, 30 July 2004.

Shang mode and occasionally switches to the *Yanyue* and *Yayue* scales with their added pitches (Example 3-15a and 3-15b).

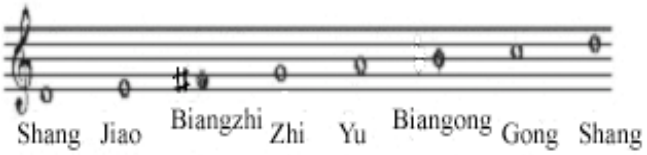
Example 3-15: The D Pentatonic Scale *Shang* mode



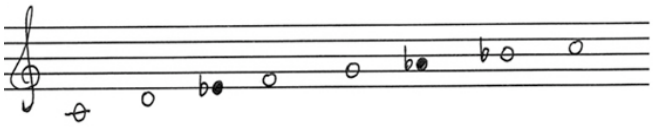
a. The *Yanyue* D Pentatonic Scale *Shang* Mode



b. The *Yayue* D Pentatonic Scale *Shang* Mode



c. The *Yanyue* C Pentatonic Scale *Shang* mode



The melody is repeated a whole step down in measures 5–8, modulating to *Yanyue* C Pentatonic Scale *Shang* Mode, and then switches to the left hand in measure 9 (Example 3-15c). The intervals of the minor and major second are

significantly emphasized as a melodic motive throughout the piece. Examples include the B♭ and the A found in measure 2 and the A♭ and the G found in measure 6 in the right hand. It is worth noting that at the end of each melodic phrase in measures 4, 8, and 19, the composer purposely places a major-second interval. The last three notes in descending motion naturally bring each melodic phrase to an ending. In the middle section, the pitches B♭ and C are emphasized even more by means of the *forte* markings. Although the piece is fundamentally based on pentatonic scales, quite often pitches which do not belong to the scale on which a given section is based will also appear prominently. The C# found in measures 4, 19, and 21, and the B in measure 8 both serve effectively as auxiliary notes, for example, though neither belong to any scale used in this piece. Rather, these notes are developed from the minor-second motive. If the composer were to have used only the pentatonic scale pitches, the music would absolutely lack its touch of modern musical style.[61]

Chen points out that the final two chords of this piece are his individual adaptation of a standard Western tonal progression. The penultimate chord is a German-sixth chord (in Western terms) and should resolve to the dominant. However, the composer does not yield to this expectation nor follow this practice. Chen explains that stacking up the pentatonic pitches in fifth or fourths will not create dissonance and will also express a recognizable harmonic characteristic of the Chinese scale system. Therefore, the pitch G in the German-sixth chord does not resolve to F# as it would in the Western style harmony; rather the G remains in the

[61] Chen, 27 Oct. 2004.

resolution chord. However, the augmented sixth E♭ and C♯, which is the most important part of the progression, does resolve properly. The last chord is formed with the perfect-fifth interval D–A, which lends a stabilizing effect. Thus, even though the German sixth does not resolve "properly," it does not create any uncomfortable dissonance.[62]

Battles On Horse Back

In this third piece, Chen strives to delineate the back and forth motion between children astride their mounts pretending to battle one another. Though written primarily in the D pentatonic scale in *Shang* mode, the composition quickly switches to *Yanyue* and *Yayue* scales soon after the appearance of B♭ and F♯ in measure 2 (Example 3-15a and 3-15b, the placement of the added tones in a heptatonic scale was explained earlier in the chapter).[63] Chen also uses a few non-scale tones, especially in the parallel-fourth chords, to highlight the interval of fourths inherent in the pentatonic scale. Unanticipated accents also interrupt the melodic flow, contributing to a musical atmosphere that is full of surprises. In measures 7 and 8, the right hand plays a series of chords set against the melody played with the left. The composer uses primarily quartal harmony (sometimes in combination with augmented-fourth and major-third intervals) to portray the children riding their horses. The quartal chords are made by combining two perfect-fourth intervals, and, similarly, the arpeggios in measures 1 and 2 are formed by the

[62] Chen.
[63] Chen.

consecutive perfect fourths that are characteristic of the Chinese pentatonic scale system.

Chin-Yow Lin:

Ox–Cart, from Volume I

Among Taiwanese composers, Chin-Yow Lin (b. 1948) is particularly fond of depicting the rural scenery of Taiwan's villages through music. Many of his works included in *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* such as *Pretty Country Suite*, Volume 3 (1995); *Field Suite*, Volume 4 (1998); and *Water Wheel*, Volume 5 (1999) demonstrate Lin's enthusiasm for portraying the countryside of his native land. These works share many characteristics. Chinese scales are used to form simple folk melodies, the pieces are all notably homophonic, the textures are light, and the rhythms are uncomplicated. They all possess clear phrasing, which helps students to develop a sense of musical structure in their early study. Lin hopes that through the study of these simple and appealing pieces, students will experience the enjoyment of playing their native music.[64] Lin uses his piece *Ox-Cart* to evoke images of Taiwanese farming in the past. The music employs several pentatonic scales and begins with a slow tempo accompanied by a "noisy" low-register *ostinato* bass line, illustrating the slow and methodical pace of an ox.

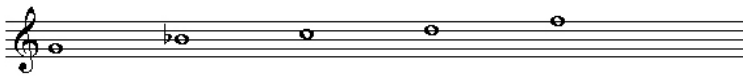
The melody is built on a G pentatonic scale in *Yu* mode from measures 1–18 (Example 3-16a). The composer avoids the tonic pitch G in the left hand, though it

[64] Chin-Yow Lin, telephone interview, 30 August 2004.

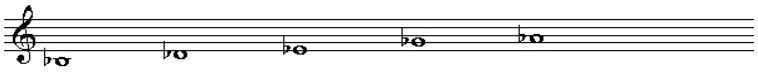
appears after measure 13, but the melody is quite focused on G in the right hand. Beginning at measure 24, the appearances of the accidentals D♭, A♭, and G♭ suggest the upcoming modulation to a B♭-pentatonic scale in *Jiao* mode (Example 3-16b). It is very natural for the composer to move from one modal scale to another, creating an effect similar to Western-style modulation. In Ming-Huei Lin's book *Jung guo yin yue chuang tzuo de shin fang shiang* (*The New Direction of Chinese Music Creation*), the author describes four types of modulation found in Taiwanese music.[65] The first type of shifting from one modal scale to a completely different modal scale, as seen in *Ox-Cart*, is used in order to achieve musical and harmonic contrasts because the mode, the scale, and the key signature are all different.

Example 3-16: The Pentatonic Scales Used in *Ox-Cart*

a. G Pentatonic Scale in *Yu* Mode, mm. 1–18.



b. B♭ Pentatonic Scale in *Jiao* Mode, mm. 19–25.



c. C Pentatonic Scale in *Shang* Mode, mm. 38–60.

[65] Lin 69.

Starting in the middle section of the piece, in measure 26, the composer extends the fragmented phrase to a full measure to create the effect that the phrases are each variations of the first section. The music's forward motion at this point is created by the left hand's slow ascent in eighth notes, along with the more complete melodic phrases in the right hand. Lin uses parallel-fourth chords D♭ and G♭, C and F in the left hand to achieve the modulation to a C pentatonic scale in *Shang* mode from measures 37–38 (Example 3-16c). The music reaches its climax in measure 40, and afterwards both hands gradually descend to the bass register. The left hand returns to the *ostinato* seen in the beginning, and the right hand, in bass clef, plays partial phrases until the end.

Lin's *Ox-Cart* is based purely on the pentatonic-scale system. He uses intervals of minor thirds and major seconds a great deal throughout the piece to achieve a melody with a Taiwanese flavor. Chords constructed from fourths and fifths also appear frequently, for example in the opening right hand. It is important to recognize the composer's deliberate use of the G pentatonic scale *Yu* mode in the beginning section combined with his later modulation to the C pentatonic scale *Shang* mode. These two scales contain the same scale pitches, but start on a different tonic. Therefore, the music is able to maintain a coherent feeling.

Long-Kwang Hsieh:

Springtime Frolic, from Volume 3

Springtime Frolic (1996) is a selection from the *Chuen-Huei* piano album composed by Long-Kwang Hsieh (b. 1943). The phrase *Chuen-Huei* (translated literally as "Light of the Spring Sun") symbolizes the warmth of parental love and care. The *Chuen-Huei* piano album can be seen as a Taiwanese set of two-part inventions and was written for young children to learn to play clearly in two voices while also developing a good singing style on the piano. The *Chuen-Huei* collection contains a total of nine pieces; these are also included in various volumes of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*: *The Autumn Moon and Spring Breeze* and *Skipping Rope* are both found in Volume 2, *Ancient City Tour*, *Springtime Frolic*, and *Lantern Play* are included in Volume 3, and *Spring Sunbeam*, *Dream of Love*, *A Little Drama*, and *Legend* are contained in Volume 4.[66]

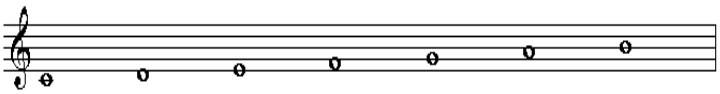
The melody of *Springtime Frolic* is constructed on a *Qingyue* C heptatonic scale in *Gong* mode (Example 3-17). The *Qingyue* C heptatonic scale contains the same pitches as the Western C-major scale, but in Hsieh's *Springtime Frolic* the music projects a strong Asian flavor. Hsieh's harmonic approach of avoiding the tonic is clear because the music lacks any strong feeling of cadence. There are only two places, in measure 35 and measure 62, where phrases end on the pitch C. Moreover, the tonic is not emphasized in the same way as it might be in Western music. Also, Hsieh sometimes uses the tonic as a simple auxiliary note to de-

[66] The *Chuen-Huei* pieces are composed in different years. Therefore, they are compiled in different volumes of the *New Taiwan* series.

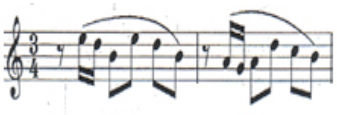
emphasize its importance: for example, in measures 2 and 8, the pitch C serves only as a passing tone in the melody. While the music may lack any strong cadence, the piece still has somewhat of a tonal effect. There is the feeling that measure 1 suggests a G chord, and then measure 2 suggests a D chord for the first and second beats followed by a resolution to C at the beginning of measure 3. Thus, the following harmonic progression could be implied: V–II_6–I_6–V_{64}–I. Worthy of note are the local cadences that arrive on a bald fifth (as in measures 4 and 44) or on an octave (as in measure 9 and 49). This brings contrasting resonance to the melody. The melodic characteristic of Chinese music, however, is certainly still emphasized here over any harmonic progression. It will be difficult to find a truly "satisfying" Western-style cadence in any piece based on Chinese scales.

The contrast between the theme (measures 1–8 in the left hand) and the counter melody, which accompanies the left hand, is reflected in the rhythm. The theme uses long note values, such as half notes and dotted-half notes, to deliver a more lyrical melody. The accompaniment employs smaller note values, such as eighth notes, sixteenth notes and eighth rests, to create a restless and playful feeling. Note that the right hand is to be played *mezzo-forte* while the left hand is marked *forte.* Then these dynamics are reversed in measure 10. The pattern of two sixteenth notes followed by four eighth notes, found in the accompaniment, serves as an important rhythmic motive (Example 3-18).

Example 3-17: *Qingyue* C Heptatonic Scale, *Gong* mode, Used in *Springtime Frolic*



Example 3-18: Rhythmic Motive in *Springtime Frolic*



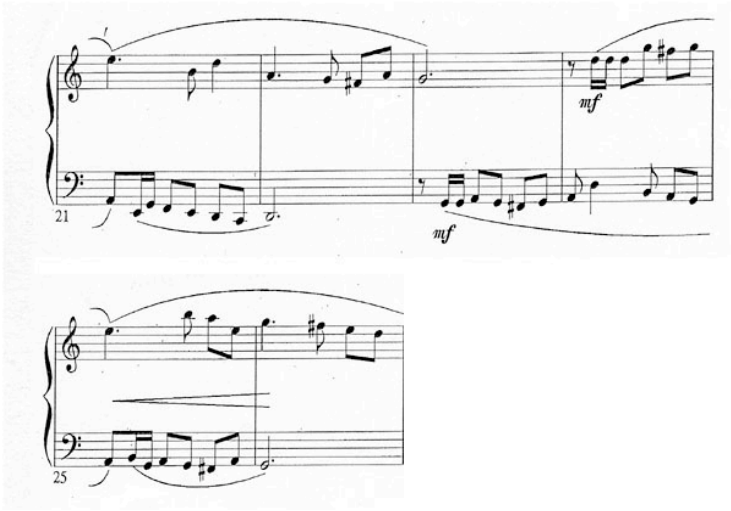
Measures 1–26 introduce the subject, played by the left hand, and the countersubject, played by the right hand. In measures 10–19, the subject and the countersubject switch hands, and the music of measures 1–7 is literally repeated at the interval of a perfect fifth, transposed to G heptatonic scale *Gong* mode. The middle section (measures 27–40) is a short development based on the rhythmic motive taken from the opening theme. The theme is based on C *Yanyue* heptatonic scales and subsequently stated a fourth higher in measure 41 before returning in the original mode in measure 50 this time with the voices reversed. The piece begins on the fifth pitch G (the pitch *Zhi* in the Heptatonic scale) and returns to the tonic at the recapitulation. The concept of avoiding the tonic at the beginning of a piece is an idea adapted from Western music.

As discussed earlier, the most natural and popular melodic progression in Chinese music is the combination of the intervals of the major second, the minor third and the fourth. Considering the beginning two phrases in the right hand, one

discovers that the melody here is indeed formed mostly by these intervals, and the intervallic leaps of a fourth between pitches are also inherited from the Chinese scale. Also, in this piece the composer inverts the melodic contour to create a kind of echoing effect. For example, in measures 21 and 25 the right hand is inverted (Example 3-19a). In measures 31 and 32, the fragmented phrases switching between the two hands—which contain two repeated notes followed by two eighth notes—echo one another while at the same time moving in opposite directions (Example 3-19b). This musical conversation between symmetrical phrases certainly adds pleasure and interest to the listening experience.

Example 3-19: Musical Conversations in *Springtime Frolic*

a.



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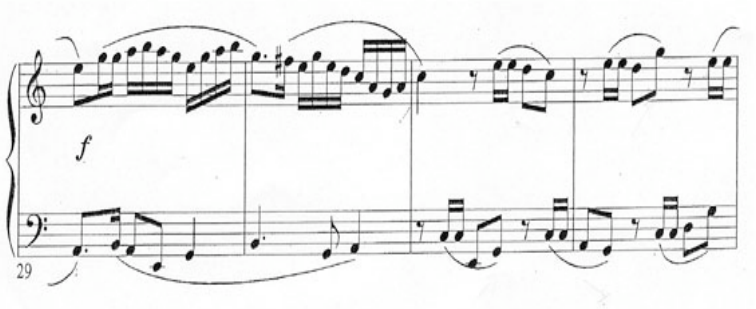


Hsieh chose to compose in a distinctive style of two-voice counterpoint, using Chinese modality to display the lyricism of Taiwanese music. Thus, for native students and teachers who have been playing largely Western music, these works are definitely worthwhile exploring.

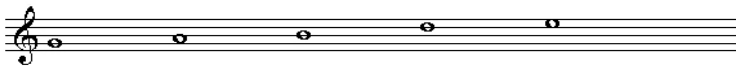
Wey-Ming Yen:

Happy New Year, from Volume 4

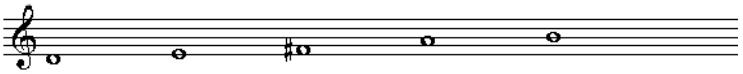
Happy New Year (1992, revised in 1997), composed by Wey-Ming Yen (b. 1966), expresses the joyful atmosphere of the Taiwanese New Year. The composition conveys a strong folksong style. Yen employs two pentatonic scales in the piece—the G pentatonic scale and the D pentatonic scale—both in *Gong* mode (Examples 3-20a and b). The piece opens with the two voices imitating one another. The melodic motive introduced forms the framework of the melody and is reiterated many times with embellishments, as in measures 2, 3–4, and 13–14. Thus, a continuous musical effect is created. In the *Allegro* section, a new motive is presented (in the left hand in measure 25), the D pentatonic scale in ascending motion, written in a more playful and jumpy style. Yen creates a specifically Taiwanese flavor with the pentatonic melody in *Happy New Year*.

Example 3-20: Two Pentatonic Scales Employed in *Happy New Year.*

a. G Pentatonic Scale in *Gong* Mode



b. D Pentatonic Scale in *Gong* Mode



Native composers are able to structure their music on Chinese scales and modes, just as the Western composers base their music on the major and minor scales that are at the foundation of their works. Taiwanese composers may modulate to different modes and switch between *Yanyue*, *Qingyue*, or *Yayue* scales. Moreover, each of these scales incorporates both five-tone and seven-tone varieties. Thus, the variety and versatility of Chinese scales and modes thus lends an interesting and distinctive character to Taiwanese contemporary music.

Chapter IV

Modern Compositional Techniques and Notations in the *New Taiwan Piano Music Works*

Examining the development of Taiwan's music over the course of the past forty years reveals that Western music has deeply influenced most Taiwanese composers. In the twentieth century, as contemporary music developed in the West, this inevitably influenced Taiwanese composers' thinking, bringing new perspectives that affected their approach to the art of composition. Thus, the challenging and immediate new task for young Taiwanese composers is to develop distinctively Taiwanese contemporary music.

In contemporary music, traditional music notation is often insufficient to the task of creative expression. Composers may abandon time-signatures and bar lines, for example, determining the length of the notes instead by temporal durations, in order to free the music from an arbitrarily restricted division of time. In the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*, few composers incorporate into their works *avant garde* musical effects or notations, though some such effects and notations—avoiding time signatures, drawing symbols, adding instructive text on the score, and omitting bar lines—can be seen. Nevertheless, rhythms, often complex, play a significant role in their pieces, as does the use of unconventional time signatures. Although innovation in contemporary music is not the main focus of the pieces in *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*, there is no doubt that Taiwanese composers are endeavoring to display versatility in the writing of their music while

also projecting the creative potential of their art and a diversity of musical styles to the public. Works composed in a contemporary style in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* are generally written specifically for higher-level students ready for more advanced techniques.

This chapter offers an analysis of two such advanced études, *Pour les Quartes* (*For Fourths*) (1992) and *Pour les Quintes* (*For Fifths*) (1992), written by composer Ghing-Yu Hsiao (1966). In Hsiao's works, no distinctive Taiwanese flavor is found. Her music, however, does reveal that modern notational techniques have begun to be incorporated into the works of Taiwanese composers. The two études are imbued with the French style of impressionism. They serve as excellent finger exercises emphasizing intervals of fourths and fifths. At the same time, the works are full of artistic expression. A third piece presented in this chapter is composed by Chi-Hung Cheng (b. 1965). Inspired by an ancient Chinese poem, Cheng's piece, *Listening to Rain*, is distinctively modern, creative and, importantly, Taiwanese.

Ghing-Yu Hsiao:

Two Works from Volume 6—*Pour les Quartes* and *Pour les Quintes*

***Pour les Quartes*, from Volume 6**

Pour les Quartes was written at the time that Hsiao was a student in Paris, and the style of Hsiao's etude is influenced by the piano études of the French composer Maurice Ohana (1914–1992).[67] *Pour les Quartes* is written in free form, without bar lines or any time signature, as a fantasy. The music covers a wide range of the

[67] Ghing-Yu Hsiao, personal interview, 30 July 2004.

keyboard. Fourths (the emphasis of the study) are treated in different ways, as grace notes, extended chords, and double notes. In system 2, consecutive extended chords are formed by several fourths piled up on one another. In system 3, the left hand plays successive octaves a perfect fourth apart in ascending motion. In the fifth, twelfth, and final systems, the composer presents fourths as graces notes. The vertical and horizontal fourth intervals intertwine between voices in the eighth system while also forming an ascending chromatic scale.

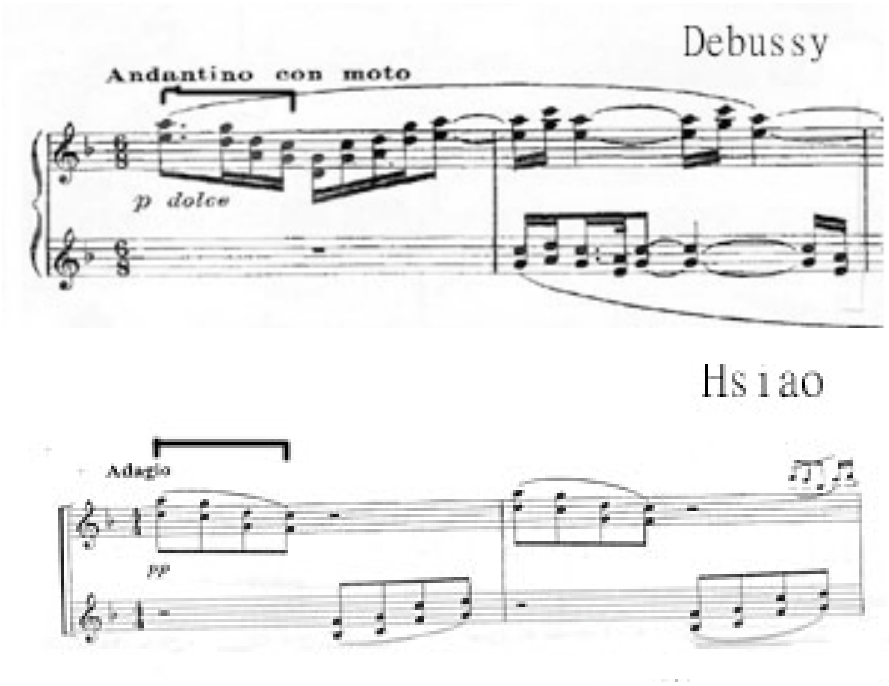
In *Pour les Quartes*, Hsiao also employs pianistic sonorities and resonances to create a variety of sounds and atmospheres. She abandons the conventional thinking that a piece should contain musical motifs developed throughout the work. This etude has no such motifs; the emphasis is on sound effects, tone colors, and the flow of pitches.

***Pour les Quintes*, from Volume 6**

This etude is deeply influenced by the impressionistic piano study *Pour les Quartes* (1915) written by Debussy.[68] Example 4-1 shows that there is direct motive allusion (the pitches on the top A-G-D-C), a near quotation from Debussy's *Pour les Quartes* in the beginning. As is typical of an impressionistic style, Hsiao strives for a subtly colored effect of sound. Dynamic expressions and pedaling must be taken under consideration in order to achieve the desired colorations. In comparison with the previous etude, this piece sounds much less typically contemporary, and the fundamental structure of *Pour les Quintes* is a classical A-B-A' form (Example 4-2).

[68] Hsiao.

Example 4-1: Direct Motivic Allusion from Debussy's *Pour les Quartes* in *Pour les Quintes*



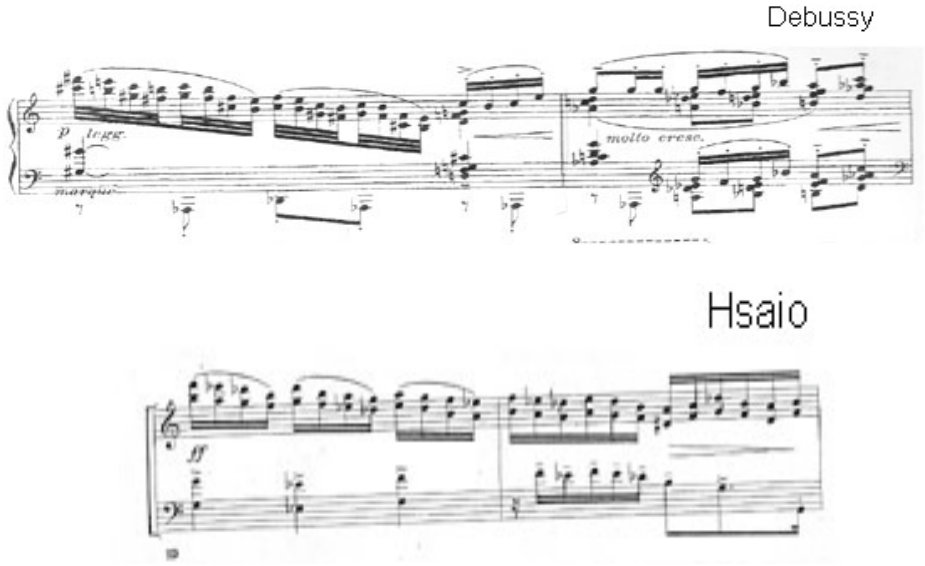
Example 4-2: Musical Structure of *Pour les Quintes*

A	4/4 (mm. 1–13)	Adagio	F Major
B	6/8 (mm. 14–41)	Allegro	C Major
A'	4/4 (mm. 42–55)	Adagio	F Major

In the A section, Hsiao uses fifths to create a quiet wavering voice in continual ascending and descending motion, with exchanging hands. The melody is written in a different register, separated from the middle voice and is constructed of many irregular rhythms, with accents and crescendos on repeated *staccato* notes and grace notes. To bring out these musical details, the continuous fifths should be played *legato* and as quietly as possible so that the melody can stand out and produce a contrasting color.

In the B section, the time signature switches from 4/4 to 6/8. This is another place where the influence of Debussy is clear. Illustrated in Example 4-3, the passage in Hsaio's work (in measure 19) is similar to Debussy's, in other words, the figuration is the same; only the phrasing is varied. The music begins to move faster with undulating sixteenth-double notes in fifths. The double notes appear in various motions, rising and falling. The emphasis on the horizontal ascending-fifth octaves C–G–D in measures 14, 16, 21, and 31 is apparent. The A' section returns with simpler writing, and the piece concludes with the resonances of bold and straightforward perfect-fifth intervals.

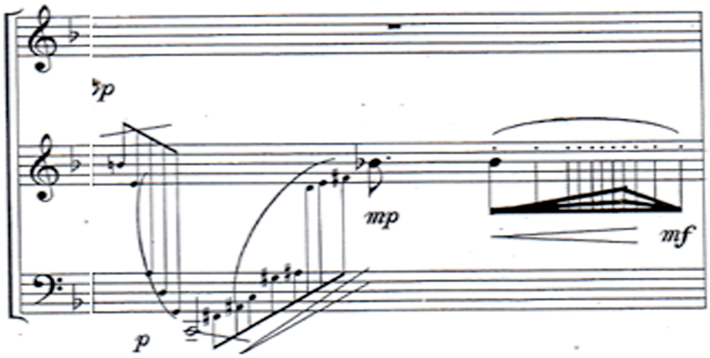
Example 4-3: Figuration Influenced by Debussy's *Pour les Quartes*



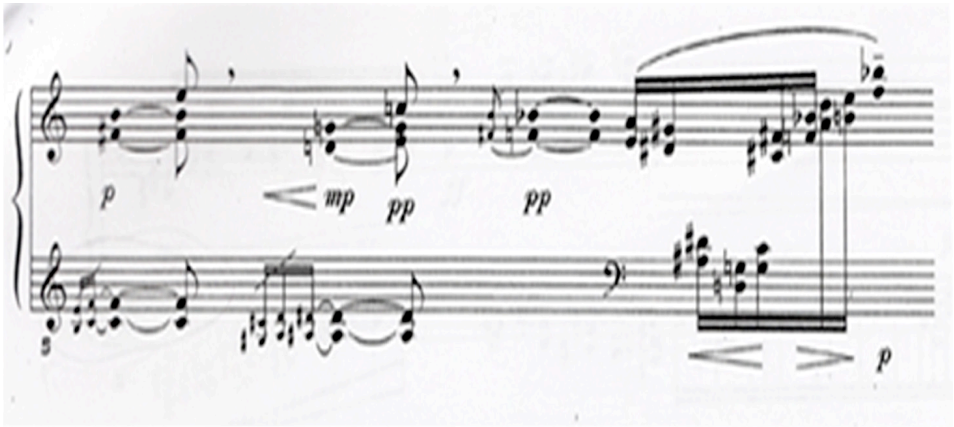
In the two etudes, Hsiao uses some modern notations for creating coloristic sound effects and giving rise to different textures in the music. In Example 4-4 the eighth-note arpeggios with the slash-mark should be played very fast. Afterward, the note heads of the pitch B♭ are omitted, and only black dots are shown above the

stems. These notes are beamed together as *accelerando* and *ritardando* figures. The phrase starts slowly, then accelerates and finally slows down again. The pianist must be careful with the changes of speed and dynamics. In Example 4-5, Hsiao also uses quarter notes with no stems as an expression encouraging an improvisatory and free style of playing.[69]

Example 4-4: Modern Notation Found in *Pour les Quintes*, m. 12



Example 4-5: Modern Notation Found in *Pour les Quartes*



[69] Hsiao.

Chi-Hung Cheng:

Listening to the Rain, from Volume 1

Chin-Hung Cheng's *Listening to the Rain* is a single-movement piano work inspired by the ancient Chinese poem, *Yu the Beauty*, by Jiang-Jie (1245–1310) from the Song Dynasty (960–1279).

Yu the Beauty

> In my youth, I listened to the rain on the high towers with singsong girls,
> The red candles dimmed the gauze curtains.
>
> In my manhood, I listened to the rain in a traveling boat;
> The river was broad, the clouds hung low, and the lost wild geese cried in the west wind.
>
> Now I listen to the rain in a monk's hut.
> My hair is spotted gray at my temples.
>
> Neither grief nor joy, nor parting nor reunion any longer stirs my heart,
> Let the rain tick-tock on the front steps until dawn.
>
> (Translation by Kuo-Ying Tsai)[70]

Jiang-Jie expresses in his poem an evolution of the sentiments felt by the protagonist while listening to the rain during sequential stages in his life. The poem is written in four verses. In the first verse, the poem describes a youth listening to the rain while indulging in the pleasant sensual and sexual feelings of a young man. In the second verse, an adult in the prime of life listens to the rain while agonizing over the pursuit of fame and wealth. Lost to the pleasures he might enjoy instead, his heart is full of loneliness. The third and last verses describe an old man who has had enough of the vicissitudes of life and has become numb to its potential. The

[70] Kuo-Ying Tsai, *Chinese Poems with English Translations* (Taipei: Cheng Chung, 1975) 95–96.

poem epitomizes human life and embodies both a descriptive and a retrospective quality.

Example 4-6 illustrates the structural parallel between Jie's poetry and Cheng's music. Each poetic section, as explained above, represents different stages of life. Musically, three contrasting sections, A, B, and C, convey the various sentiments one experiences in each of these periods. To further illustrate the poem, Cheng skillfully ties the piece together by inserting a *ritornello*-like theme, the "rain theme," between the contrasting sections and using materials closely derived from this theme within the sections themselves. This repeated use of the rain theme and its fragmented motives support a sense of musical unity throughout the work.

Example 4-6: Parallel Structure of the Music and Poetry in *Listening to the Rain*

	Music		Poetry
	Introduction	(mm. 1–7)	
Young Man	Rain theme	(mm. 8–16)	
	A section	(mm. 17–38)	Verse 1
Adult	Rain theme (varied)	(mm. 39–46)	
	B section	(mm. 47–85)	Verse 2
Elder	Rain theme (varied)	(mm. 86–94)	
	C section	(mm. 95–109)	Verse 3
Coda	Same as Intro.	(mm. 110–116)	Verse 4

First introduced in measure 8, the rain theme is formed by two minor-second intervals in the right hand (C♯–D and F♯–G) played against the major-second interval F–G in the left hand. It is noticeable that in the rain theme, the composer favors minor-second and major-second intervals. The use of these small intervals effectively represents the mood and the sound of raindrops. The rain theme, which ends on the chord formed by pitches C, D and G in measure 16, is articulated differently in each section. The seconds and this particular chord are the two most prominent musical figures to connect between the theme and the intervening A, B, and C sections. The first two bars of the rain theme are identical each of the first three times it is repeated in measures 8–9, 39–40, and 86–87. Subsequently, the musical material is varied upon the theme when it recurs. Ultimately, the same chords return, but they are played with slightly varied rhythms (in measures 15–16, 45–46, and 93–94).

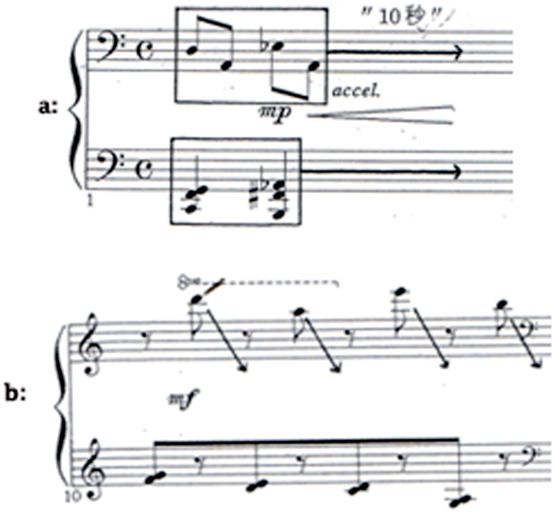
Sections A, B and C each portray the poem's protagonist in his youth, prime of life, and old age, respectively. In section A (measures 17–38), the music sounds vigorous with dotted rhythms (in measure 18) and glissandos. Large intervallic leaps followed by dotted rhythms evoke a youthful fervor. The musical connection between the rain theme and the A section is clear. The frame notes which begin the section (C–D in the left hand and G–D in the right hand) are derived from the ending chord of the previous measure. Also, the fragmented melodic phrases in measures 20, 23, and 32 are presented in different forms of that same chord. The intervals of seconds (C♯–D, F♯–G, and C–D) derived from the rain theme in section A create a consistent timbre.

In section B, the time signature changes from 2/4 to 3/4, and in measure 56 changes again, to 4/4. In the corresponding second stanza of the poem, the adult, worrying through the prime of life, listens to the rain while traveling by boat. Noticeably, the upper-register arpeggios derived from the chord of the rain theme now appear in continuing arpeggios. This section is composed in a rhythm of six in the right hand (imitating of the waves of the river water) set against four in the left. The music of section B begins to sound more chromatic and atonal based on the composer's use of minor-second intervals starting from measure 56, which is also a musical figure drawn from the rain theme. Harmonic dissonances, written in grace notes, portray the striking of the Chinese gong at midnight, with repeated enunciations of D♭ written in *parlando* style (in measures 65 and 66), creating a feeling of desolation. Afterwards, the music returns to the *barcarolle* effect again, followed by the rain theme that leads to section C. With a similar approach, Cheng emphasizes the arpeggio chord derived from the rain theme to show the musical connection between the theme and the intervening sections.

Cheng creates an atmosphere of stillness in this final section. The image of the old man is conveyed by means of a slow tempo and the repetition of a melodic phrase (in measure 95). At this point in Jiang-Jie's poem, the protagonist becomes a monk and listens to the rain in a monk's hut, feeling calmly released from both the wordly pleasures and the pains of life. The repeated notes heard in measures 97 and 98 imitate the wooden drum which a Buddhist monk beats while chanting. The introduction is reiterated at the end, as a closing coda, completing the cycle of life.

Chi-Hung Cheng captures the poetic and sentimental feelings of Jiang-Jie's poem partially through adopting modern notations to create a distinct atmosphere including special sound effects in the music. In example 4-7a, the framed notes are performed in the same pattern according to the composer's time indication with *crescendo* and *accelerando*. The Chinese symbol between quotation marks reveals that the duration of the measure is to be ten seconds. Also, the student must be aware that the duration of the measures may vary throughout the piece. For example, the indicated duration for measure 17 is eight seconds. The arrows in Example 4-7b portray the poetic theme visually as streaks of rain falling from the sky. They are to be performed in the same manner as a *glissando*.[71]

Example 4-7: Modern Notation in *Listening to the Rain*

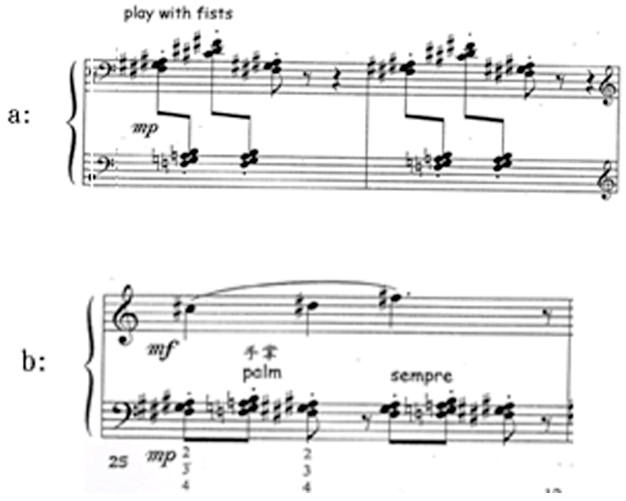


[71] Chi-Hung Cheng, personal interview, 30 July 2004.

There are other instances of the use of modern notational techniques to be found in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* collection. Long-Kwang Hsieh, in *A Great Event,* employs rectangular symbols to indicate tone clusters (Example 4-8). In Example 4-9a and b, composer Fang-Lin Su uses traditional notation in her work *Dragon and Lion Dances* with the indications "play with fists" and "palm" to encourage particular percussive sound effects, thus employing traditional music notation to indicate a modern piano performance technique.

Example 4-8: Modern Notation for Tone Cluster in *A Great Event*

Example 4-9: Traditional Tone Cluster Notation in *Dragon and Lion Dances*



It was in the 1960s that native Taiwanese composers first began to incorporate twentieth-century notation in their music. Then, in the 1980s, as the number of indigenous Taiwanese composers grew rapidly and these composers also worked more prolifically, the incidence of modern notations found in their works also increased dramatically. The most common practice, however, was still very much the use of traditional notations.[72]

[72] Shui-Mei Young, *Jinn wu shyr lai Taiwan gang chyn dwu tzow cheu jong shin jih puu faa jy yan jiow* [*Research on the Use of Modern Notation in Taiwan Piano Works in the Past Fifty Years*], *National Taiwan Normal University Journal* 15, no. 9 (2002): 607.

Chapter V

Native Folk Traditions as Expressed in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*

The use of folk material in Western art-music composition is perhaps best demonstrated in Bartók's music. He made many settings of actual folk tunes, for example, turning them into artistic keyboard music.[73] The pieces compiled in Bartók's *Mikrokosmos* are written in a variety of keys which place great emphasis on folk modes and nondiatonic scales rather than relying on the Western major-minor tonal system.[74] For Formusica composers, *Mikrokosmos* is kept in mind as the obvious model—linking piano pedagogy to folklorism—for creating the *New Taiwan Piano Works*. Given this as an example of the use of folk art, the incorporation of folk idioms within a sophisticated modern art-music idiom is hardly a novelty. More recent composers, however, have typically taken a different approach to the use of folk elements in music. While composers from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries primarily sought to frame folk tunes harmonically and melodically within their compositions, contemporary composers have sought to achieve a broader variety of folk idioms in their works. Not only folk tunes, but also folk rhythms and musical portrayals of traditional customs, scenes, festivals, and poetry are all considered to be apt material for expressing a people's heritage and history through music. The engaging and varied incorporation

[73] The book *Béla Bartók Essays*, edited by Benjamin Suchoff includes several essays on the topic.

[74] Benjamin Suchoff, *Bartók's Mikrokosmos: Genesis, Pedagogy, and Style* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 30.

of folk elements in many of its works is one of the appealing characteristics of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*. Fang-Lin Su's *Temple Festival Suite* (1997) beautifully expresses the affectionate emotions and devotional nature of a rural and religious population. Su's piece *Dragon and Lion Dances* (1999), quite differently, depicts the exuberance of festivities celebrating the New Year in Taiwan. In further contrast, Long-Kwang Hsieh's *A Great Event* (1999) was composed in commemoration of a devastating earthquake in Taiwan's modern history. Finally, Chi-Hung Cheng's *Chinese Double Fugue* (1994) serves to illustrate the effective and creative fusion of a familiar Chinese folk tune with an established Western Baroque form. These diverse works, incorporating folk elements in a variety of ways, are all worth exploring in the study of music as they represent the culture, traditional customs, history, and religious beliefs of the Taiwanese people.

Though few music analyses offered in this chapter are of programmatic pieces, program music (that which has a strong narrative sense) has existed in Chinese *NanKuan* as early as the Tang Dynasty. Over the centuries, *NanKuan* music followed the emigrant Minnan descendants overseas to Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Hong Kong. NanKuan music is literally program music, illustrating, as it does, the scenes of the four seasons, flower blossoms, and other depictions of nature.[75] Accordingly, program music is not at all foreign to Taiwanese native composers. Many Taiwanese folksongs themselves and, also, pieces found in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* and have at least a partial programmatic function to evoke a scene or event.

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[75] "The History of Nankuan," 8 April 2005 <http://www.hantang.com.tw/hantang.htm>.

Fan-Ling Su:
Procession of the Deities and *Taoist Exorcist* from the *Temple Festival Suite* (1997), Volume 2

The temple fair is a traditional Taiwanese religious festival generally held yearly at the site of a temple. During the festival, devout followers worship their deities and pray to achieve what they wish for in life. Since the majority of Taiwanese people are practicing Taoists or Buddhists, the temple fair is an important yearly event, particularly in rural villages. Fang-Ling Su's *Temple Festival Suite* depicts both traditional Taiwanese festival customs and the sincere emotions of Taiwan's religious followers. The suite consists of five pieces: *Procession of the Deities*, *Crossing the Fire*, *Presage*, *Carrying the Palanquin*, and *Taoist Exorcist*. In a separate score of the suite, the composer writes the musical interpretation in English:

> The theme of the music portrays the folklore and customs of Taiwanese people by [means of] rhythmical sensations, scherzando, joyful noises, and mysterious calms. It tries to express in music the affection of people to [sic] their land, and sincere devotion to their God. It also attempts to score a contemporary appeal and fancy by the compositional techniques of Modern music.[76]

Procession of the Deities

Temples in Taiwan are either Taoist or Buddhist, and the Taiwanese worship a variety of deities including the Jade Emperor, Taoist fairies, folklore heroes and heroines who were elevated to the stature of Holiness, as well as the Mercy Buddha and the Sakyamuni Buddha. Thus, observance of the Procession of the Deities is an important and colorful ritual in Taiwan. On the fourth day of the first month of the

[76] Fang-Ling Su, *Temple Festival Suite* (1999).

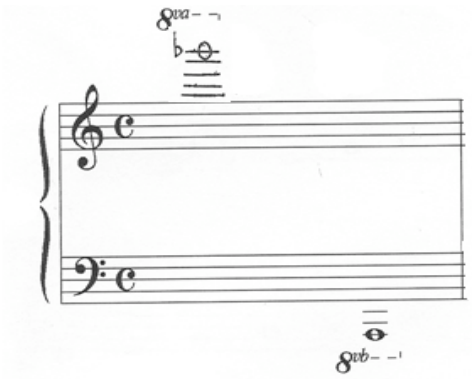
Chinese lunar year, religious followers celebrate the return of their deities to the mortal world in an exciting festival with a variety of activities including a parade featuring lion dances, acrobatics, folk dances, and marches accompanied by music. The Procession of the Deities is an extremely colorful, noisy, and lively event, but it is a pious one as well.

Su's work endeavors to portray not only the excitement of the procession ceremony but also the dignified and mysterious ambiance of the festival. The music makes use of the full range of the keyboard, including the lowest pitch A and the highest, B♭ (Example 5-1). The divergent range for both hands (high range for the right hand and the low range for the left hand portrays the Tall and Short Deities that are found in Taiwanese Temples. According to the Buddhist religion, these two deities are believed to lead dead criminals to receive their punishment by placing them in one of the eighteen layers of hell.[77] The composer opens the piece with a short introduction. Octave sonorities with longer note values played at a slow tempo, accompanied by the right hand playing most eight notes and two sixteenth notes, represents the Deities as they begin to walk for the first time.[78] Starting in measure 9, unceasing, screeching, and mostly eight notes and two notes create a distinctive character in the music, providing dissonance when joined by the left hand. Some dissonances are emphasized by pausing on the fermata, for example in measures 5 and 25 where the pitch B♭ is played against A. An important feature adopted in the music is that of repetitive notes played constantly in the high register. After a long pulse on pitch A in the *Misterioso* introduction, the repetitive notes

[77] Tobita 122.
[78] Tobita 127–128.

start to move slowly, proceeding from A through B, C, B, Bb, A, Ab, G, F#, G, G# and then to A. In measures 17 and 18 both hands (G, G#, A in the right hand and the bass notes B, Bb, A in the left) stress chromatic intervals on the strong beats and move in contrary motion. Tobita describes in her thesis how 'sliding notes' produced by the "qin, " a traditional Chinese instrument, are mimicked in this movement through the prevailing use of minor-second and major-second intervals either vertically or horizontally, as well as rapid passages of scales created by the composer.[79] These intervals not only generate dissonance, they also produce a chromatic effect in the music, creating a solemn, sublime, and mystical atmosphere for the procession.

Example 5-1: Pitch Range in *Procession of Deities*



Taoist Exorcist

Taiwanese people pay great respect to a Taoist exorcist, a person they believe is chosen by God to be His messenger. Usually, in the temple festival, the exorcists dance erratically and utter incantations. Then they write on papers, with calligraphic strokes that are incomprehensible, to generate amulets or talismans. Alternatively, they make statements of people's past history, talk with deceased

[79] Tobita 128.

persons, or make predictions of the future, by murmuring words or by holding a chair and using one leg of the chair to write words in a flat surface of sand.[80]

In *Taoist Exorcist*, Su uses many dissonances, contrasting dynamics, constantly changing meters, whole tone scales, polychords and syncopated rhythms to describe the performance of the exorcist's exotic movement.[81] A motif introduced in the first two measures is constructed of eight eighth notes in 4/4 meter with accents on the first and sixth eighth-notes, followed by a syncopated rhythm and two eighth-notes in 3/4 meter. The strong rhythmic pulse depicts the dance of the exorcist. The three eighth-notes B–G–D in measure 3 can be seen as a melodic motif. Later, this motif is extended to form a complete seven eighth-note phrase, as seen in measures 18 to 19 and 26 to 27.

The contrasting musical textures are intended to reflect the changeable nature of the Taoist exorcist's dancing. Su puts emphasis on the rhythmic figure and unexpected accents on the chords in the opening section. She uses wide leaps to stress the accented notes in the treble clef and quick dynamic shifts to contrast with the smooth melodic line in measures 14 to 17. Here, Su uses only major-second intervals horizontally to create two whole-tone scales. The bass and the tenor voices move in different whole-tone scales, producing a calmer sound, in contrast with the previous section. Tobita explains in her study that the rising and falling whole-tone scale appears twice and seems to portray the calm spiritual communication that exorcists perform in their incantations.[82] The music becomes agitated again in

[80] Fang-Ling Su, *Temple Festival Suite* (1999).
[81] Tobita 134.
[82] Tobita.

measures 18 and 19. The expanded melodic elements based upon the motivic pitches (B–G–D) in the right hand become octaves and are extended to form a longer phrase. After the climax, the music gradually quiets. Suddenly, in measures 26 and 27, the composer brings back a melody similar to that from measures 18 and 19, but played an octave higher. The original motif (B–G–D) becomes B♭-G-D, in measure 18, then returns to the original pitches, in measure 26. Toward the end, more syncopated chords are used in measures 34 to 37 to create a forceful cadence before the last recall of the melodic and rhythmic motifs.[83]

Su frequently creates dissonance in this work using minor seconds placed both melodically and harmonically. The dissonance emphasizes the polytriadic opposition between the two hands. In the opening, for example, the B-major triad (B–D♯–F♯) is juxtaposed with the F-major triad (F–A–C), and these alternate with each other. Similarly, in measure 11, the F-major triad (F–A–C) in the treble clef alternates with the E♭-major triad (E♭–G–B♭). The opposition of using different keys for the triads produces great harmonic tension and also contrasts with unified harmonic patterns such as those found in measures 14 and 28. The polytonal dissonances are also stressed by the unison of the polytriadic chords. From measure 34 to measure 37, for example, the F♯-major triad (F♯–A♯–C♯) is played against the C-major triad (C–E–G) simultaneously.

The entire piece is founded in a strong G tonic, but this is challenged by the frequent statement of the B-major triad discussed above. The G tonic does establish itself with the frequent appearance of plain G major events in the opening, as in the

[83] Fan-Ling Su, telephone interview, 16 August 2004.

downbeats of measures 3, 26 and 38 as well as in the bass line from measure 38 to the end. Moreover, it is important to distinguish the dynamic of the G-major triad from that of the polytriadic harmonic pattern, using different dynamic marks between *piano* and *forte*. Thus, turbulence is not diffused throughout the piece, but rather is emphasized at these specific moments. Su's uses of both polytonal harmony and dissonances create an uneasiness within the music and lend the piece an unsettled ambience.

Ya-Feng Cheng: *Playing with Tops*, from Volume 3

Most Chinese folk games are designed for children. Top spinning has always been a most popular game in Taiwan. Children spin tops by wrapping a string around them and whipping the top into motion by pulling the string quickly away. Adults also occasionally take part in this game and even take it to competitive levels. Tops for spinning range from miniature to giant in size, are made from metal, wood, or plastic, and are painted in rich colors. No matter what kind of top is spun, they are always a magnificent sight to see. In her work *Playing with Tops*, composed in 1994, Taiwanese composer Ya-Feng Cheng recalls carefree days from her childhood spent with friends by the riverside, enjoying the natural surroundings while happily spinning tops.

Example 5-2: The Musical Structure of *Playing with Tops*

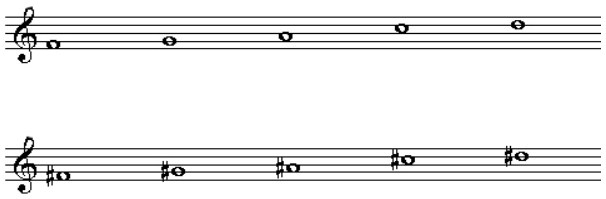
Introduction	mm. 1–9	*Adagio*
Section A	mm. 10–36	*Animato*
Bridge	mm. 36–40	
Section B	mm. 37–63	*Andante-Pastorale*
Bridge	mm. 64–67	
Section C (variant of A)	mm. 68–79	*Allegretto Animato*
Coda	mm. 80–85	

The music is divided into five sections including an introduction and a coda (Example 5-2). The introduction opens with ascending triplet figures, and the fragmented melody F#–G#–F#–B (the top notes of the sixteenths) in measure 6 provides a hint of the upcoming theme. The repetition of F# and G# is an important motivic figure. In the *Animato* and *Allegretto Animato* sections, one can clearly hear the thematic transformation of the two pitches. Here the composer utilizes the pentatonic scale *Gong* mode in B (B–C#–D#–F#–G#–B). The melody in the A section is stated twice, first on the tonic B in the left hand (in measure 10) and then again, after moving up a perfect fifth to F#, with a little variation through the addition of a grace note and triplets (in measure 22). Although the B in the left hand (measures 10 and 11) is only an eighth note, and it seems as if C# is the main bass note, the repeated B in the right hand serves to reinforce the feeling of the B pentatonic scale in *Gong* mode. Cheng has pointed out that the scattered, dotted rhythms inserted between the fast sixteenth-note figures are intended to represent the picture of several tops spinning at the same time (for example in measures 20, 21, 23, and 24). These figures also symbolize the speed at which the tops spin.[84]

[84] Ya-Feng Cheng, telephone interview, 27 August 2004.

In the B section, *Andante-Pastorale* (measures 37–67), the tempo slows, and beginning in measure 41, the music sounds more lyrical. The music evokes a more relaxed and easygoing atmosphere. It portrays the scene of children at rest in the square, taking a break from their game.[85] The mood changes noticeably in the B section. As seen in Example 5-3, Cheng employs pentatonic scales at a distance of a perfect fifth above the tonic B (F#–G#–A#–C#–D#–F#) and a half-step down (F–G–A–C–D–F). Opposing black-key and white-key sonorities create colorful harmonies and a style of bitonality. Toward the end of section B, the triplet figures act as a transition leading to the C section. The theme is varied in triplet form and continues as a single phrase ending with the Coda. The ascending motion, with an increasing crescendo at the end, illustrates again the children's rising emotions and excitement as they return to their game.[86]

Example 5-3: Use of Pentatonic Bitonality in the Middle Section of *Playing with Tops*



[85] Cheng.
[86] Cheng.

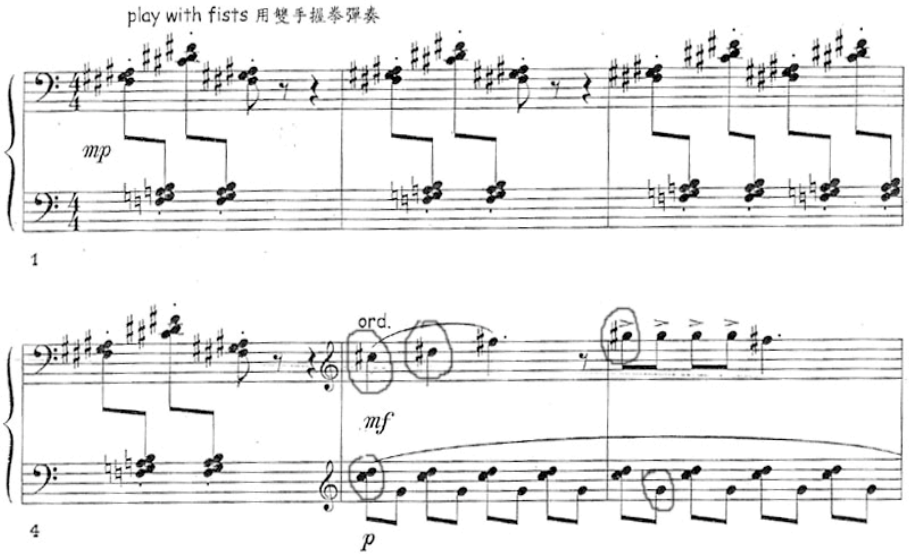
Fan-Ling Su:
Dragon and Lion Dances, from Volume 6

Traditionally an important part of Chinese New Year celebrations, dances of the dragon and the lion are included among the many ceremonial festivities dedicated to ensuring peace, prosperity, and good luck in the year to come. Images of these dances are now well-known internationally as Asians have immigrated to Western countries and brought their favorite ceremonies with them. The dances typically feature acrobatic displays performed by elaborately costumed Kung Fu athletes. The leader wears an animal head costume, and the rest of the team moves along according to the leader's movements. A lively and vital performance, successfully conveying the cocky and energetic spirit of the dragon and lion, requires close teamwork and a tacit understanding among the athletes involved. Large skin drums, gongs, and cymbals provide rhythmic accompaniment.
Both inspired by and intended to evoke the exuberance of the festivities, Su's composition for piano captures the distinctive and diverse elements of the dances.

Composing in a musical style that differs from that of *Taoist Exorcist*, Su wrote *Dragon and Lion Dances* specifically as an avenue for children to explore a variety of piano-playing techniques appropriate for young people to learn. The piece is composed in a straightforward style intended to portray the festive spirit of Chinese

New Year. The rhythm for the cluster notes is simple and straightforward, as it imitates the sound of a Chinese drum that is played during this traditional dance.[87] Here, it is written in *staccato* chords, is introduced in measures1–4 (marked "play with fists") and is set in contrast to a simple melody, composed in the style of a folk song, accompanied by eighth notes (Example 5-4). The result sounds like an *ostinato* bass when the folk melody is played. The characteristic gong and drum folk rhythm found in measures 1–4 is a familiar one to native people. It is used in national festivities and celebration ceremonies such as Chinese New Year.

Example 5-4: Use of Folk Rhythm in *Dragon and Lion Dances*

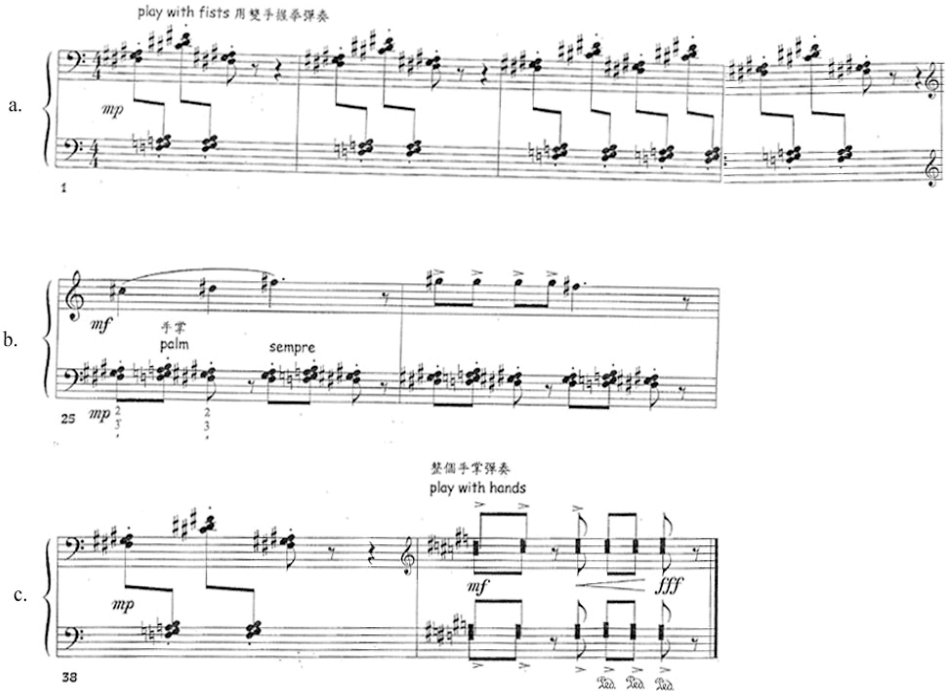


In *Dragon and Lion Dances*, three different hand techniques are addressed to produce various sound effects. Su marked "play with fists", "play with palm" and "play with hands" as shown in Example 5-5. "Play with fists" is used when the rhythms of the gongs and drums occur in the piece. From measure 25 and onward,

[87] Tobita 122.

the left hand plays a fixed rhythm (derived from the gong and drum rhythm) until measure 33. The left hand in this section uses the palm to play both black-key and white-key chords which were shared by two hands before (in measures 17 and18). The palm creates a slapping sound, accompanying the folk-like melody on the top. In the last measure, the music requires both hands to press the keyboard in order to play the specific pitches the composer has indicated.

Example 5-5: Hand Techniques in *Dragon and Lion Dances*



The use of bitonal dissonances is another important feature of this piece. They are employed to convey the noise and excitement of the event. Starting from the beginning, the right hand plays only the black keys and the left hand plays only white keys. In measure 1, the first-beat and second-beat chords (F#–G#–A# and C#–D#–F#) are generated by a pentatonic scale (F#–G#–A#–C#–D#–F#). The melody begins in measure 5, is also built on this particular pentatonic scale, and is

constantly set against an *ostinato* bass (C–D–G). The clashing between the C# and C; the D# and D; and the G# and G produces a discordant sound throughout the piece (Example 5-4).

Dragon and Lion Dances successfully portrays the joyful atmosphere of the Taiwanese New Year. Techniques such as playing with fists for emphasizing chords, combined with an easily remembered folksong melody, will absolutely engage children both to play the piano and to refresh their happy memories of celebrating the New Year.

Long-Kwang Hsieh: *A Great Event*, from Volume 6

Long-Kwang Hsieh's *A Great Event* is dedicated to the people who died in Taiwan's devastating earthquake, which occurred on 21 September 1999. The music has a distinct narrative character. The catastrophic event, which the people of Taiwan refer to as the 9/21 Earthquake, killed approximately 2,400 people and left over 8,000 injured and at least 400,000 homeless. The beautiful landscape of Taiwan was suddenly destroyed. This was the most disastrous natural event in Taiwan of the twentieth century. Hsieh composed his commemorative work in the week following the earthquake as a means to express his grief and sympathy as well as that of the entire nation of Taiwan. *A Great Event* was well received and has subsequently been performed in numerous venues including the Meyer Hall in

Taipei, the Recital Hall at President's Residence, and the National Recital Hall in Taipei.[88]

An example of program music, *A Great Event* is a piece that actually tells a story in a narrative sense. The music is divided into seven sections, each correlating with the event of the earthquake and its aftermath (Example 5-6). In sequence, Hsieh vividly delineates the serenity of the day before the earthquake occurred, the moment the earthquake strikes, the aftershocks, and the horrible impact of the resultant devastation. The composer uses a great many octaves in the piece to create a heavy hearted and serious atmosphere. The employment of triplet and quintuplet groups, syncopated rhythm, a reversed dotted rhythm, and running thirty-second notes are all intended to evoke a sense of anxiety. Toward the end of the peice, the music takes on a religious tone of consolation, intended no doubt to soothe the grieving hearts of those listening. Those who had experienced the earthquake responded readily to this opportunity for catharsis through music.

Example 5-6: The Seven Sections of *A Great Event*

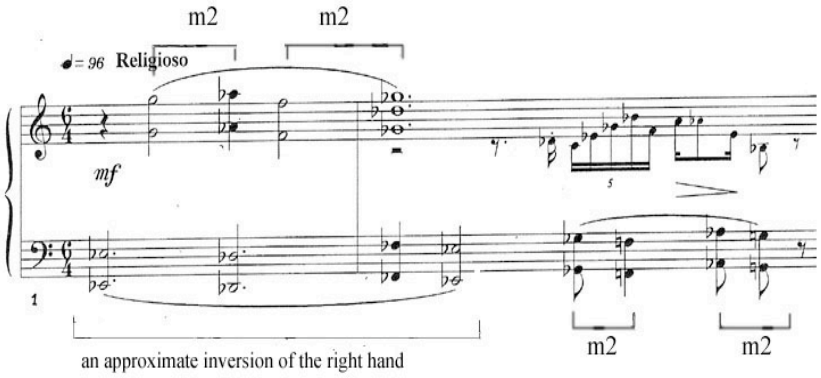
Introduction	mm. 1–7	*Religioso*
A	mm. 8–13	
B	mm. 14–33	*Fervore*
C	mm. 34–54	*Con sentimento*
D	mm. 55–89	*Un poco animato*
E	mm. 90–107	*Illuminante*
Coda A'	mm. 108–117	

A Great Event is an atonal piece. The principal motive is based on two minor-second intervals (G–A♭ and F–G♭) in the ascending right hand, with an inversion of

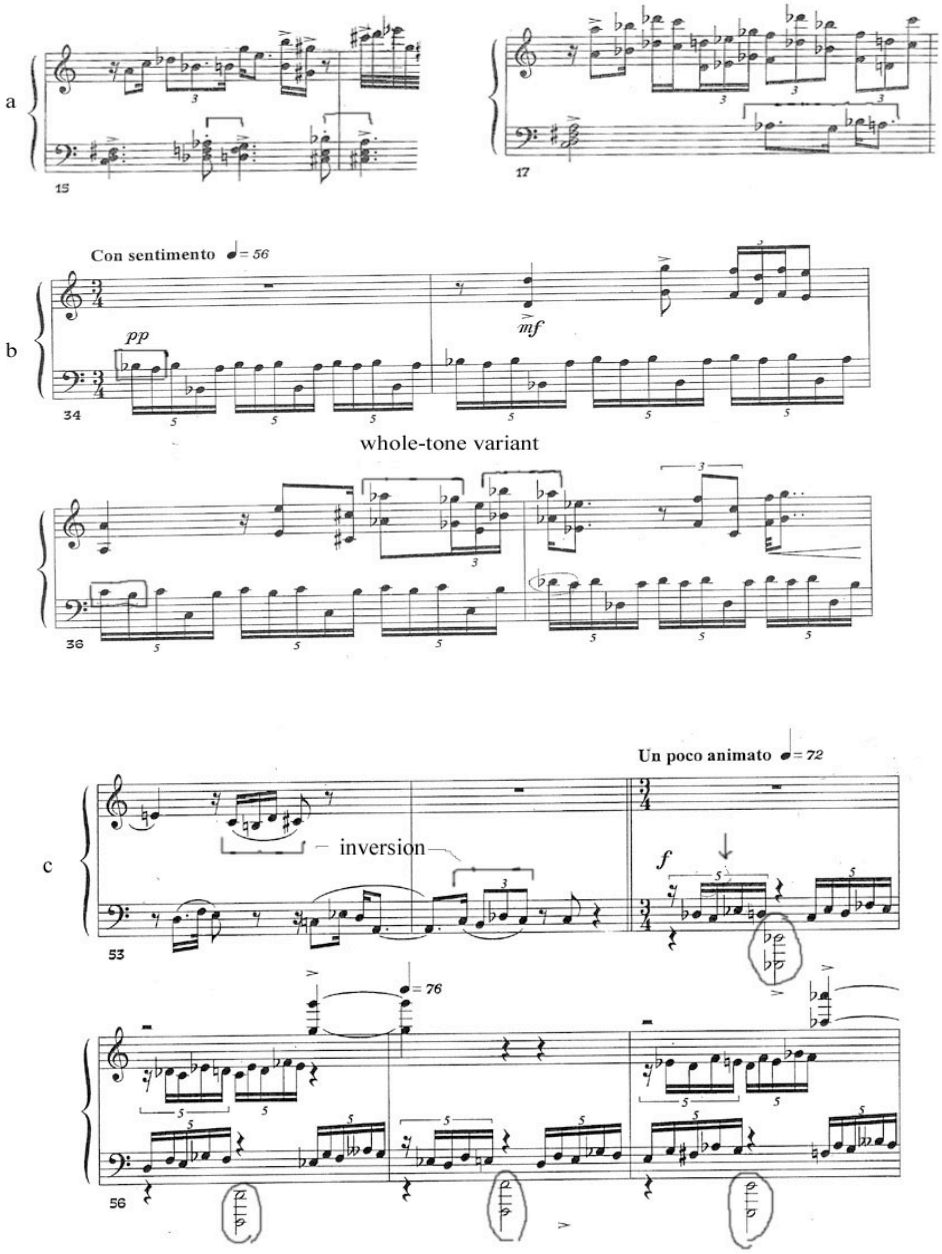
[88] Long-Kwang Hsieh, personal interview, 30 July 2004.

the motive (G♭–F and A♭–G) in the descending left hand. The motive slowly expands as the music unfolds (Example 5-7). These two consecutive minor seconds form a chromatic fragment and appear in diverse forms throughout the piece as seen in Example 5-8. In Example 5-8a, the motivic pitches are found on the top notes of the chords. In Example 5-8b, the pitches are placed in the first two notes of the quintuplet in the left hand accompaniment, not consecutively but apart. In the right hand, the composer varies the motivic interval (minor-seconds) into whole-tones. In Example 5-8c, the motive first appears in inversions and then forms the quintuplets and is also found in the bass, the octaves slowly ascending in half steps. Hsieh uses varied rhythms and forms to expand upon his motive and create different textures in sound for the piece.

Example 5-7: The Motivic Interval in *A Great Event*



Example 5-8: Diverse Forms of the Motivic Pitches found in *A Great Event*



The C section of *A Great Event, Con sentimento*, is elegiac in character, foreshadowing the tragedy that is to be unleashed. The melody oscillates between tonal and atonal harmony. In measures 35 and 42, the melody begins tonally, but in

the upcoming phrases (beginning with the second beat in measures 36 and 43) there is heavy use of accidentals. This creates clashing dissonances set against the left hand's quintuplets. The persistent quintuplets in the left hand also serve to portray an anxious mood. The harmony in measures 34–47 progresses slowly, moving in half steps, starting with the pitches B♭–A, and ascending through C–B, D♭–C, E♭–D, E–D♯, F–E, and F♯–E♯. The intensity of the music increases as the pitches rise.

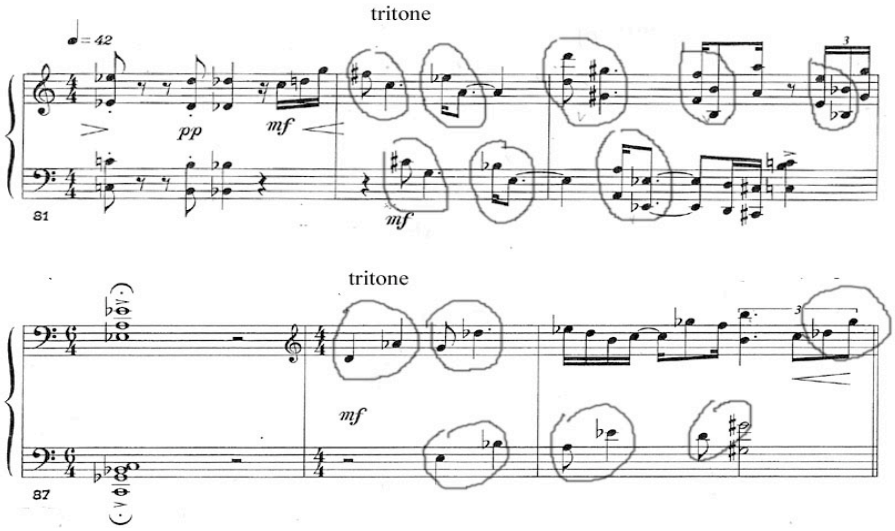
The D section, *Poco animato*, represents the beginning of the quake and the resultant suffering. Here, the minor-second motive is incorporated in the quintuplet groups, and Hsieh uses the octaves to represent the earthquake shocks. The octaves on the top and in the bass never strike on the same beat (Example 5-7c). The right hand rises chromatically from *g*4 to *d*5 and the left hand is moving up in half steps, E♭–D, F–E, G–F♯, A–G♯. The quintuplets and the octave gradually increase the musical intensity which reaches a climax in measure 68. The pianist must be aware of the increasing tempo indications, which occur every two measures until the climax, measures 68–72, the point at which Hsieh dramatically portrays the actual earthquake shocks, employing successive tone clusters played by pounding the keyboard with the arms. After measure 72, the aftershocks of the earthquake are delineated by means of decreased tone clusters in the left hand. There follows a restatement of the melodic motive heard in the introduction.

The *Illuminante* section is intended to provide consolation and comfort to the listener.[89] It is likely a programmatic intention for the music in this section to have the soothing harmonic stability of a well-grounded key. The section begins with an

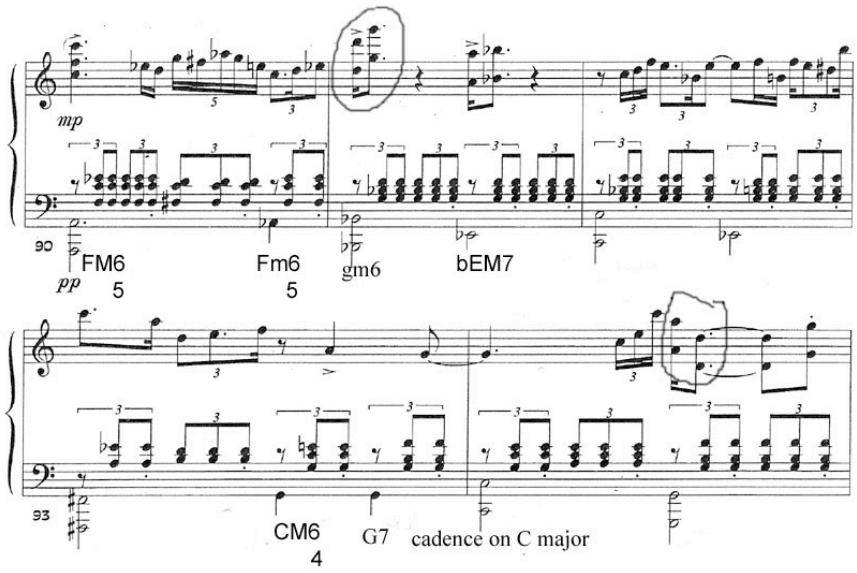
[89] Hsieh.

F-seventh chord in measure 90, followed by a G-minor chord in first inversion and an E♭ seventh chord in the next measure. When the local cadence arrives at the C-major and the G-dominant seventh chords in measure 93, one experiences the feelings of C major in measure 94 (See Example 5-10). Also, the last chord of measure 96, a G major in first inversion, is leading to C major in measure 97. An unexpected G-dominant seventh chord follows in measure 98 and lands on A minor in measure 99. Toward the end this sentimental section, the melody cadences using a V_7–I progression in C major in measures 102 and 103. Here, the composer places a *fermata* over the C major chord to reinforce the harmonic stability. The melody in the right hand is a transformation of the motive recalled from measure 8. The left hand accompaniment states repeated chords in a triplet rhythm, a style typical of the Romantic period in Western music. Tritones, seen in measures 83, 84, 88, and 89, noticeably interact with the perfect fourths previously found in the C section (Example 5-9). The dissonant harmonies created by tritones are resolved to perfect fourths, providing a musical metaphor for the passing of the earthquake and the peace that seemingly has come (Example 5-10).

Example 5-9: Use of Tritones in *A Great Event*



Example 5-10: Use of Perfect Fourths in the C Section of *A Great Event*



Toward the end of *Illuminante,* the composer restates the early melodic motive from the A section. The music gradually quiets, and the piece ends with a plagal cadence lending a solemn and religious effect.

Chi-Hung Cheng:
Chinese Double Fugue
(Theme from *Su-Wu-Mu-Yan* (*Shepherd Su Wu*)), from Volume 2

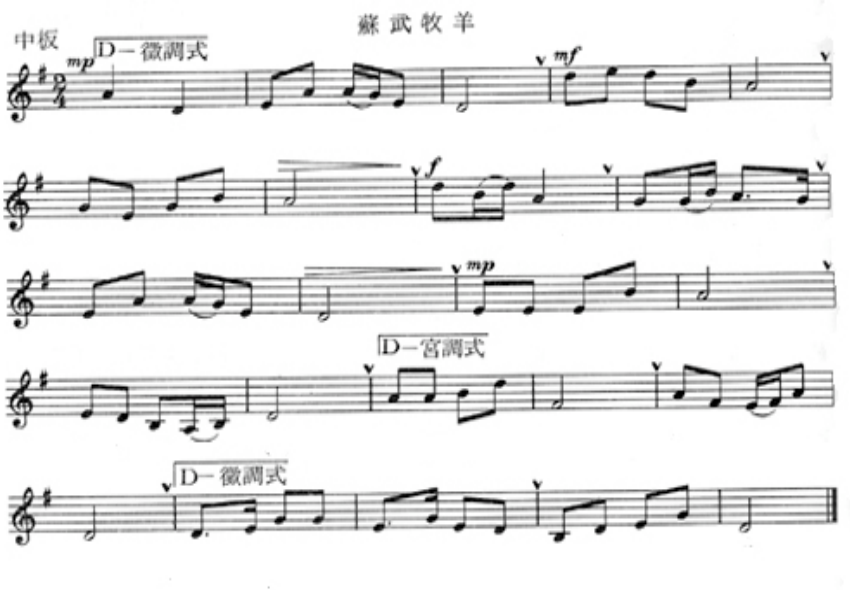
Chi-Hung Cheng's *Chinese Double Fugue* (1994) is a four-voice double fugue and serves as an excellent example of the synthesis of a native folk tune with a traditional Western musical form (in this case the double fugue form) to create a new style of Taiwanese contemporary music. This work displays various fugal techniques, utilizing augmentation, *stretto*, and the combining of two subjects to exemplify the art of writing in counterpoint. Traditional fugues contain an exposition, episodes, a middle section, and a final section. For the most part, Cheng's *Chinese Double Fugue* incorporates these same elements. As this piece is a double fugue, the music contains two subjects, referred to as A and B. The piece can be divided into three sections, and they are balanced structurally. Example 5-11 provides a diagram of the contrapuntal progress of the piece, which contains clear expositions, episodes, middle entries, and a final section. Thus, the music represents a conventional style of fugal writing.[90] The exposition and the double exposition are composed almost symmetrically. The first exposition comprises twenty-six measures, while the double exposition consists of twenty-five measures, and the final section is nineteen measures in length.

[90] Chi-Hung Cheng, personal interview, 30 July, 2004. In this interview, the composer mentioned that his *Double Fugue* had been inspired by J. S. Bach's *C♯ Minor Fugue* from *WTC I* and his *F♯ Minor Fugue* from *WTC II*. Both triple fugues thus provided a model for Cheng's *Double Fugue.*

Example 5-11: Diagram of Cheng's *Chinese Double Fugue*

Exposition I	mm. 1–11	G Major
Episode I	mm. 11–13	
Mid Entries	mm. 13–18	D Major
Episode II	mm. 18–21	
Final Section of the 1st Fugue	mm. 21–27	G Major
Exposition II	mm. 27–37	G Major
Episode III	mm. 37–39	
Mid Entries	mm. 40–44	D Major
Episode IV	mm. 44–46	
Final Section of the 2nd Fugue	mm. 47–51	G Major
Exposition III		
(Combination of Subjects A and B)	mm. 51–58	G Major
Episode V	mm. 58–64	
Final Section of the 3rd Fugue	mm. 64–70	G Major

Example 5-12: Original Melody of *Su-Wu-Mu-Yan*



Melding Chinese tradition with Western compositional style, Cheng chooses as the basis for his A-section subject the melody taken from the first three measures of

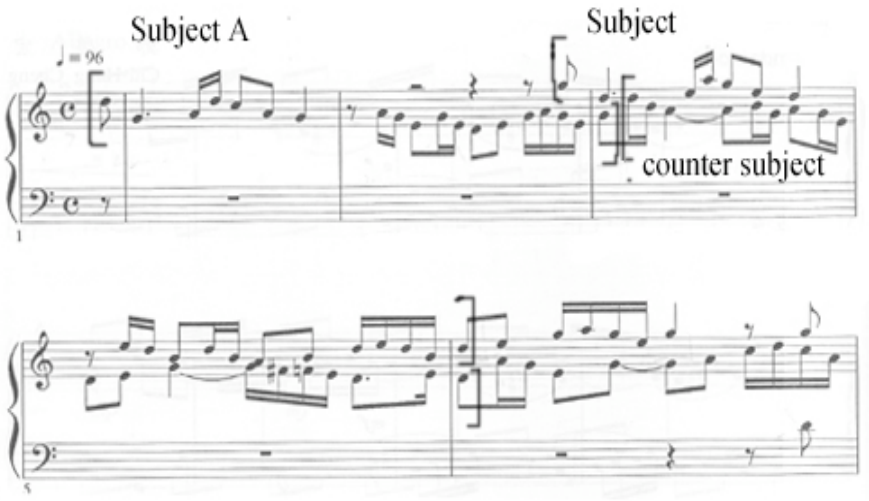
a famous ancient Chinese folk song, *Su-Wu-Mu-Yan* (Example 5-12).[91] Cheng does not copy the melody exactly. Instead, he transforms the original melody to have an upbeat phrasing, he begins on a different pitch (a fourth above that of the original theme), and he both compresses and extends the length of the melody in different sections of his notable work (Example 5-13). Comparing the subject of Cheng's *Fugue* to the tune of the original folksong, one notices that Cheng has compressed the original three-measure-long melody into a single measure. Unlike the folk song, Cheng's subject begins with a syncopated rhythm, and the repeated pitch A in measure 2 of the original tune is eliminated. In the second phrase of the fugal subject however, found in measure 2 of the *Fugue,* the first three notes, A–G–E (motive a), and the four sixteenthnotes in last beat, G–A–G–E (motive b), are taken from the fragmented phrases found in measures 2 and 4 of the original song (Example 5-14). These two fragmented phrases provide the two important contrapuntal motives which recur throughout the *Fugue*.

In the exposition of the *Chinese Double Fugue*, the A subject begins on pitch D, and its response, a "tonal" answer, begins a fourth above, on the pitch G. The subject is found also at the entrances in the double exposition section. Adding interest, not all the entrances rely upon G and D. It is normal for the subject to appear at levels other than tonic and dominant. The first and second subjects, for example, begin on pitch A5 in measures 14 and 40.

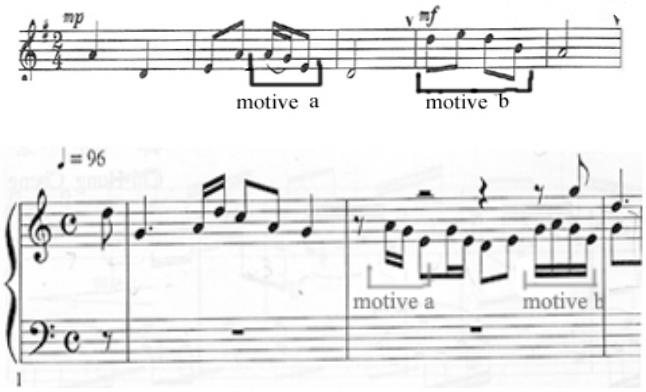
---

[91] Ming-Huei Lin, *Jung guo yin yue chuang tzuo de shin fang shiang* (Kaoshiung: Fu Wen, 1992) 70.

Example 5-13: The Subjects of the *Chinese Double Fugue*



Example 5-14: Two Rhythmic Motives in the *Chinese Double Fugue*

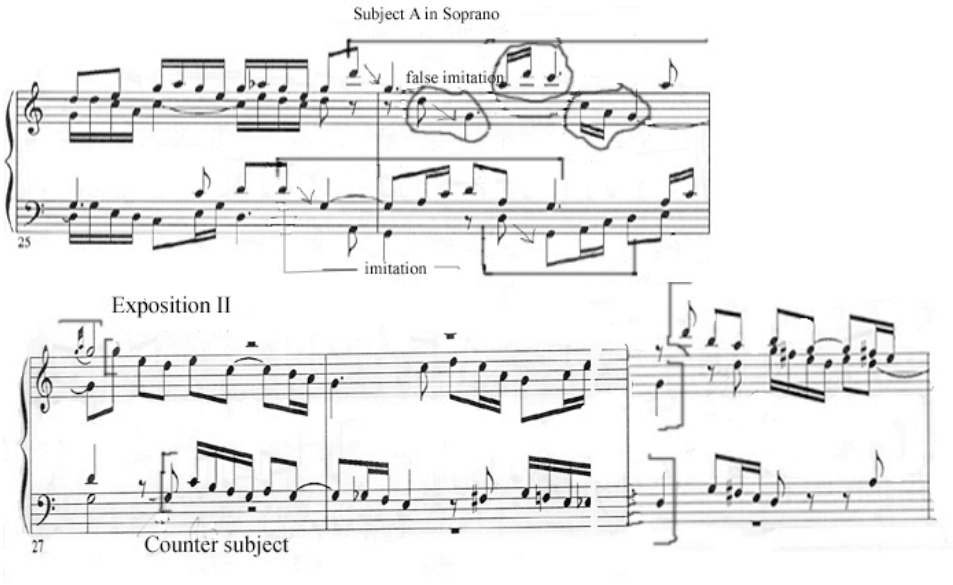


The countersubject, played below the first entry of the subject, in measures 3–5, is constructed of sequences of motive a. The episode from measures 11–13 contains passages imitating the A subject that are based on motive b. In a conventional fugue, *stretto* passages tend to occur at the end of a fugue or section. Cheng's *Double Fugue* does not contain a *stretto* passage. Toward the end of the first section however, in measures 25–27, the four statements of the first two pitches D and G of the first subject overlap in each voice (in measures 25 and 26). The

tenor and bass voices are in true imitation of a fragment of the A subject. The pitches of the sixteenth notes A–C–D are presented here in a different order than in the original statement of the A subject (where the order of pitches is A–D–C). The soprano voice states the A subject completely whereas the alto voice states a false imitation again. It is notable that this section is a motivic interplay that brings Exposition I to a close. It has a *stretto*-like effect and serves to increase emotional tension while providing a compact texture to the music. What is especially interesting is that the soprano and the alto voices combine to state the tune in measure 26.

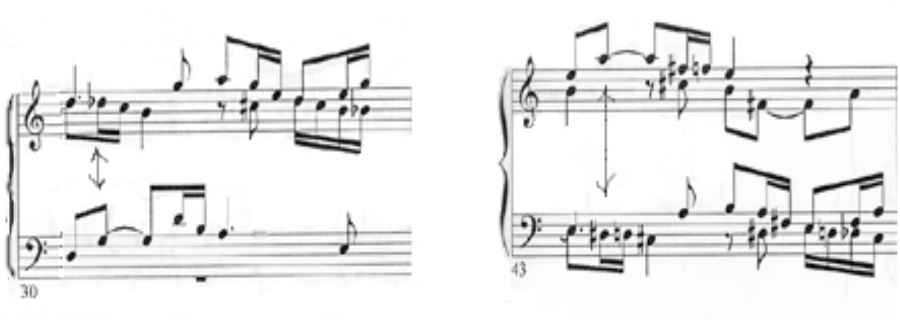
The B subject follows in measure 27, introduced for the first time by the alto voice. The texture of the second subject is smoother and more lyrical than the first subject which, in turn, is more rhythmic in character (Example 5-15).

Example 5-15: The Ending of the First Exposition and the Exposition of the Second Subject *Chinese Double Fugue*

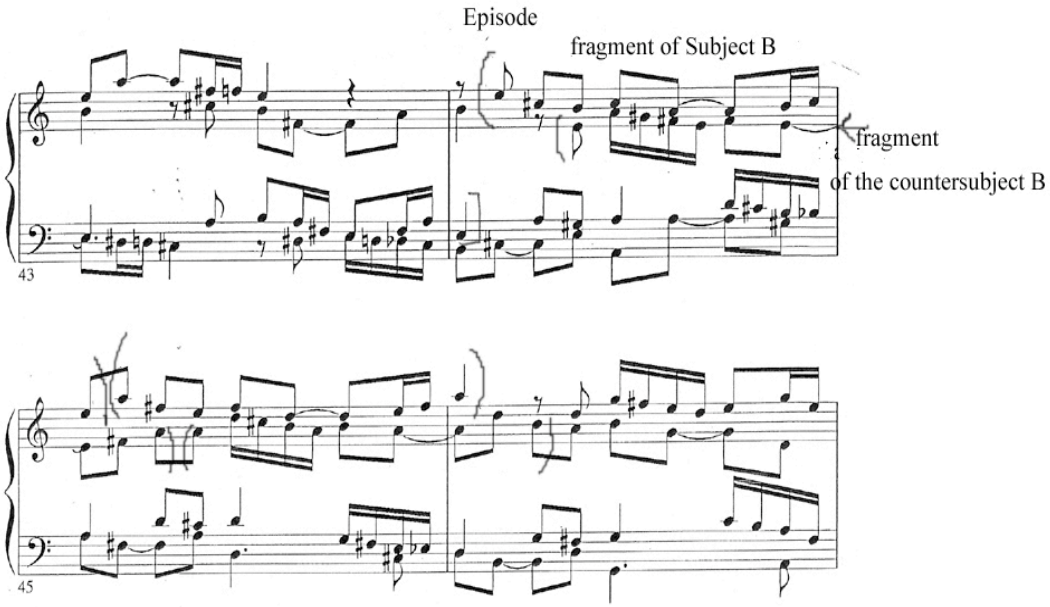


The countersubject played below the B subject also contains fragmented chromatic scales that frequently create flashes of dissonance both harmonically and melodically. For example, the Db clashes with G in measure 30 and the A similarly conflicts with the D# in measure 43 (Example 5-16). The slightly unorthodox tonal relationships of the second exposition are: G-D-D-G (usually, as in the first exposition, it would be G-D-G-D). Following the exposition of the second subject, an episode from measures 37–39 connects to the middle entries of the B subject once again. In the upcoming episode, found in measures 44–46, the composer gives a sequential treatment based on the fragmentation of the B subject-countersubject as shown in Example 5-17.

Example 5-16: Harmonic Clashes in the *Chinese Double Fugue*



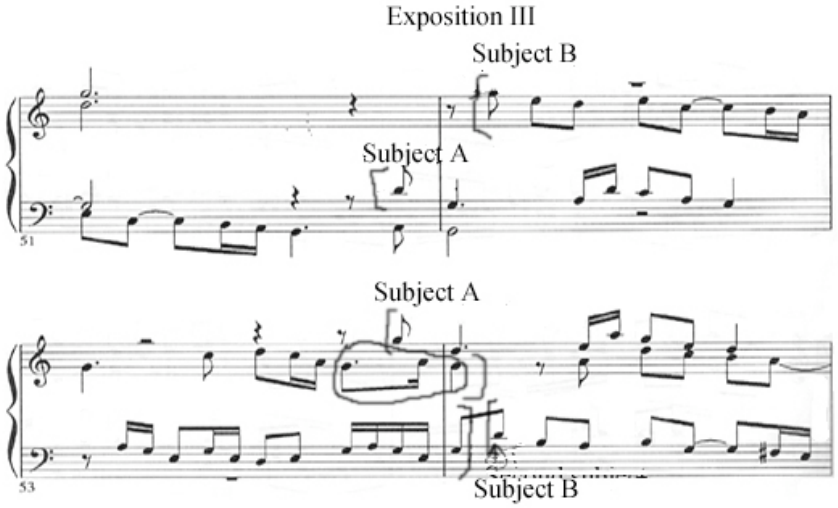
Example 5-17: Sequential Treatment in the Episode Section of *Chinese Double Fugue*



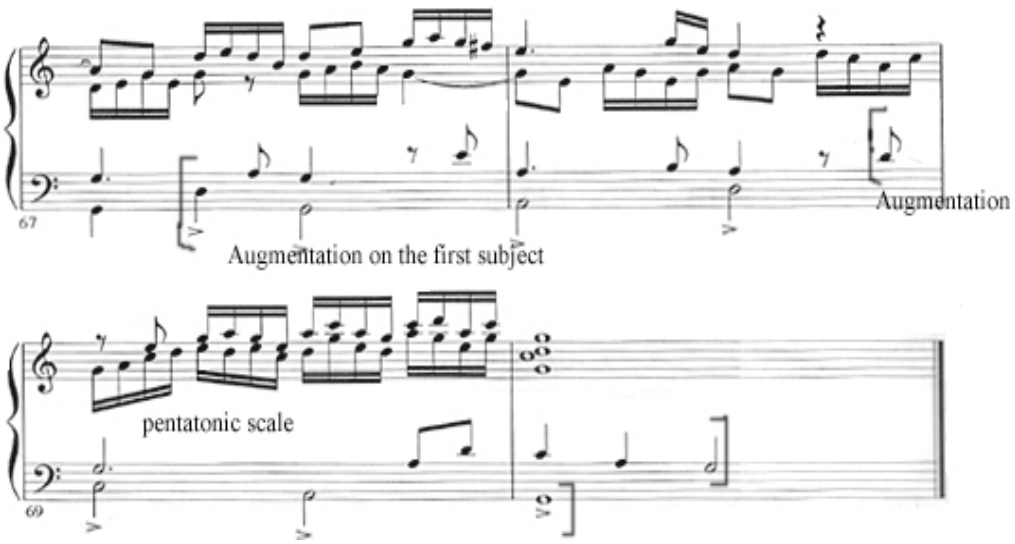
The first and second subjects join one another in measure 51, and from this point on, the chromatic scales disappear (Example 5-18). One hears instead more intervals of fifths and fourths, which are inherited from the Chinese pentatonic scale system. The composer alters the end of the B subject here to a dotted rhythm

followed by a quarter note so that the A and B subjects will end at the same time (Example 5-18). The two subjects share a strong emphasis on the pitch G and are compatible with each other. In measure 65, the A and B subjects are combined again in the final section, although only the alto and bass voices restate the subjects completely; the soprano and the tenor voices state fragments of the subject. This section is more of a *stretto* in comparison with the closing section in the first exposition because the alto states a significant portion of the A subject. The texture thickens through more compact rhythmic activities, lending a dramatic feeling here. At the end of the piece, Cheng augments the first subject, using longer notes in the bass and tenor voices to create a dignified and grand closure to the whole work (Example 5-19). A special moment occurs in measure 69. Here the music is noticeably un-Western: the pentatonic wash provides a coloristic effect, blending the voices in a way that provides a distinctly Eastern quality.

Example 5-18: The First and Second Subjects Together in the *Chinese Double Fugue*



Example 5-19: The Closing Passage of the *Chinese Double Fugue*



Cheng's *Chinese Double Fugue* demonstrates that a folk melody can be beautifully illuminated in its transformation and regeneration within a new modern context. This attitude toward composing is enthusiastically encouraged by the Formusica School. The folksong *Su-Wu-Mu-Yan* is found in the song collections in all the elementary schools in Taiwan. Cheng's *Fugue* will provide a means for native piano students to explore the music of their roots while at the same time learning to appreciate a widely used contrapuntal technique and a formal model from Western music.

Emulating the teaching aims of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Formusica composers have been inspired and motivated to write contrapuntal music to provide

for Taiwanese piano students the chance to explore this genre in the context of their native culture.

This chapter has focused on pieces imbued with Taiwanese culture, mostly program music with descriptive titles. Their analysis has revealed that native composers do not limit themselves to only Chinese harmonies when writing music about their homeland; instead, they may choose a more contemporary style of writing. The use of musical forms might be traditional, but the harmonic languages are definitely adventurous and colorful. The use of free tonality in *A Great Event* and of bitonality in *Dragon and Lion Dances* is quite significant. As native piano students study and perform these pieces, they will also feel first hand the musical influences and expressions of their own culture and heritage, making the learning experience more meaningful, in fact, invaluable.

Chapter VI

Pedagogical Elements found in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*

Carefully designed fundamental exercises play a crucial role in the serious study of any musical instrument. The development of a versatile and reliable technique is critical if the piano student is to be able to successfully approach increasingly challenging and varied pieces. Brilliant nineteenth-century composers and pianists wrote many collections of piano etudes and exercises designed to develop technique and improve digital facility. Studies written by virtuoso pianists Chopin and Liszt are excellent examples of such collections, which couch the practice of difficult technique within piano works of great artistry. Carl Czerny (1791–1857) provided a more scholastic and rigid approach with his *Theoretical and Practical Pianoforte School* (1839), a popular collection of three volumes of etudes still used by many piano teachers and their students today.

A widely known and popular progressive piano method is Béla Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*, written from 1926–1937 in six volumes. The first three volumes are specifically designed for beginners and children. *Mikrokosmos* exemplifies the approach of teaching music theory through keyboard practice. The fundamentals of musicianship are introduced one by one in the interesting materials.[92] The whole work embodies the essence of Bartók—ranging from his easiest writing to the most

[92] Benjamin Suchoff, *Bartók's Mikrokosmos: Genesis, pedagogy, and style* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002) 30.

complex and from elementary harmonic structures to more advanced bitonality.[93] The series provides challenges appropriate to pianists at many levels of proficiency. Considered to be one of Bartók's great and substantive works, *Mikrokosmos* not only represents the composer's commitment to the pedagogical process; importantly, the collection also addresses every element of Bartók's keyboard style, while employing many distinctive musical elements from his native country and conveying a strong impression of the harmonic language of Hungarian music.

Professor Mao-Shuen Chen, likewise, aspires to compose a modern pedagogical repertory that will convey the musical heritage of Taiwan and can also be used effectively and prevalently by Taiwanese teachers and students. Chen hopes the participants of Formusica will continue to work toward this goal—contributing their musical talents to nurture the musical environment of their country. As a result, the volumes of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* include, among the more advanced and challenging works, many short and easy pieces designed to teach and inspire beginners. For Taiwanese teachers and students, who have been typically engaged with Western-style pedagogies, these works serve as refreshingly original and effective teaching devices. As a rule, the pieces belonging to the beginner level of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* are imbued with an educational purpose. These works contain the most basic exercises for approaching the diverse and important issues of finger dexterity, chords, intervals, rhythms, various types of scales, and *legato* and *staccato* touches.

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[93] John Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music* (New York: Dover, 1972) 376.

Unfortunately, the matter of fingering is not taken up at all in these exercises, although learning good fingering is very crucial for pianists. When playing octaves which involve black and white keys, for example, it is better to apply fourth fingers on the black keys rather than use fifth fingers all the way through (as soon as the child's hand can reasonably span the interval). Therefore, it is the job of teachers to help their students with these challenges by suggesting good fingering choices. From my experience of teaching, it is very common for students to play with their own fingerings and struggle with particular passages in the music. In fact, many of the difficulties for young students could be resolved with good suggestions for fingerings. As a rule, the role of fingering is one of the crucial factors in fluent piano playing and should be carefully considered in approaching these fundamental exercises. In the following examples to be discussed, my own fingerings will be suggested.

Overall, the elementary pieces in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* serve as acceptable exercises and etudes to develop technique and improve finger facility. Importantly, through the works based upon Chinese modes and scales, Taiwanese students may also become accustomed to the sound of Chinese harmony at an early age. The wide variety of musical issues and perspectives addressed by Formusica composers in their elementary pieces is illustrated by the following examples, which include exercises addressing five issues: Chinese harmony, chords, finger dexterity, rhythms, and intervals.

Chinese Harmony

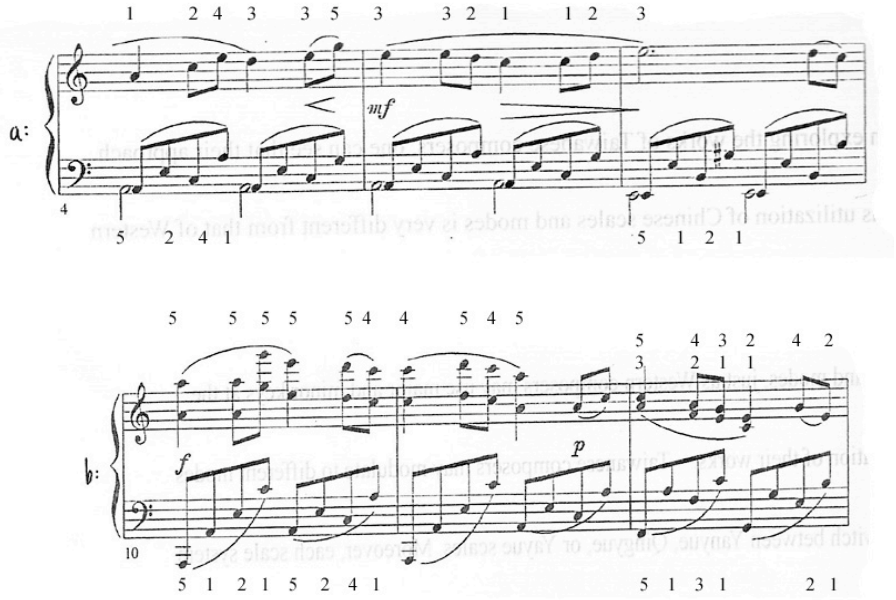
In addition to the musical examples presented in detail previously in Chapter III, all of which have important and distinctive Chinese harmonic features, it is interesting to consider, as a special example of pedagogical effectiveness, *Pur Sah Marn*, a short piece composed by Tung-Yu Su and found in Volume 2 of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*. The piece is designed for a beginning to intermediate level of piano study. Pur Sah Marn is an ancient form of Chinese poetry (arising from southern China) and is characterized by lines of irregular length and rhymed sentences. For the right hand melody, Su employs the Chinese pentatonic scale, *Yu* mode in A (A–C–D–E–G) to form a tune with a Chinese flavor and uses broken chord figurations as accompaniment (Example 6-1). The music conveys a strong sense of the tonic because of the long-held pedal pitch A in the bass. At the same time, the upper melody line is full of poetic lyricism.

The piece might become too monotonous with its continuous broken-chord figurations but for the refreshing appearances of G# (in measure 6) and F-natural (in measure 12). These pitches do not belong to the *Yu* mode and thus create distinctive moments in the music. Moreover, the composer has employed a surprising major-third interval using the pitch C# at the end of the piece serving to convert the expected minor-sounding chord A–C–E into the uplifted A–C#–E. This is similar to the effect of the "Picardy Third" in Western music.

The composer skillfully employs Chinese-style harmony to express the elegant, soft, and plaintive style that typifies Pur Sah Marn poetry. A student of this piece must be attentive, though, to the sustained bass notes on the first and third beats

while playing the broken chords. Since the fifth finger is applied to the notes on the first and the third beats and must be fully extended and remain prepared for the next note, correct playing of this passage will result in strengthening the fifth finger as well as expanding the comfortable reach the hand. In measure 10, where the melody is set in octaves with larger arpeggios, effort is required to connect the notes in order to bring out the poetic atmosphere intended by the composer (Example 6-1).

Example 6-1: *Pur Sah Marn* by Tung-Yu Su, Vol. 2, mm. 4–6 and 10–12

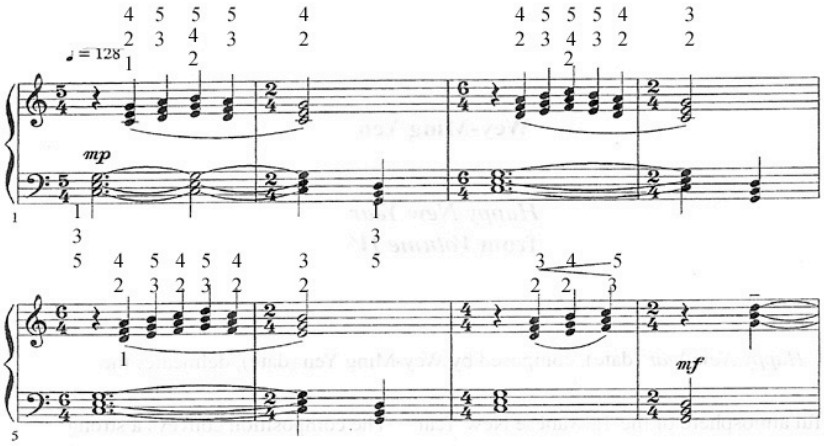


Chord Exercises

Exercises with chords help students develop good finger coordination. Tung-Yu Su's *Chords*, from Volume 4, is a study that emphasizes bringing out the top notes of chords. The technique is to play successive chords with a *legato* touch while displaying the melody line along the top. Both hands proceed with the

chordal writing (Example 6-2). My fingerings emphasize the connection between the successive notes. In measure 1 for example, the middle voice is fingered 2-3-4-3-2. This will provide a pleasing *legato* phrasing even though the top and the bottom notes are not fully connected.

Example 6-2: *Chords* by Tung-You Su, Vol. 4, mm. 1–8

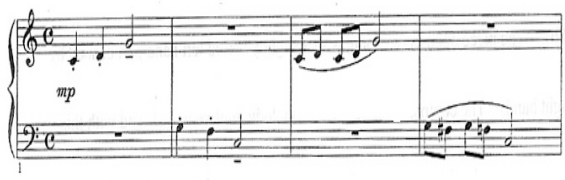


Finger Exercises

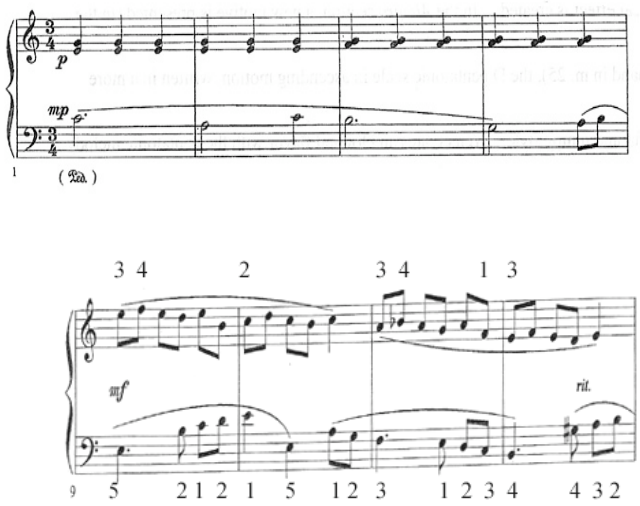
Among the various studies promoting keyboard technique for beginners in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* are three fundamental finger exercises. *A Strange Man* (1994), found in Volume 2 and composed by Ching-Wen Chao (b. 1973), is a study of playing in contrary motion. The piece also teaches students to distinguish between *staccato* notes and *legato* phrases using simple motives (Example 6-3). *Little Jasmine* (1996), found in Volume 4 and composed by Wan-Jen Hwang (b. 1970), is a study of repeated two-note chords played in the right hand as well as of legato phrasing in the left. The exercise helps the student to form independent finger dexterity and learn to interpret long melodic lines when two hands are at

variance with one another (Example 6-4). Notice that in measures 9–12, the phrase marks cross one another rather than coinciding. In *Flying Cloud* (1997), composed by Heng-Chung Mo (b. 1965) and found in Volume 5, the technique of playing repeated notes with a *legato* touch is addressed (Example 6-5). The repeated note is one of the important technical features of this piece. Thus, the choice of fingering is crucial. I would recommend the fingering 2-1-2-3-4-1-2-3-2-1-3-2-1 for the right hand in both phrases. This approach provides consistency, and the phrases will lead into each other well. This fingering lends itself to the *legato* feeling, provides for effective phrasing and dynamics, and gives the repeated notes a better sound. The examples above illustrate some of the essential techniques a student will encounter in learning to play the piano. In order to proceed successfully to a higher level, competence in these basic techniques is indispensable. The *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* provides many delightful exercises from which beginners and their teachers may choose.

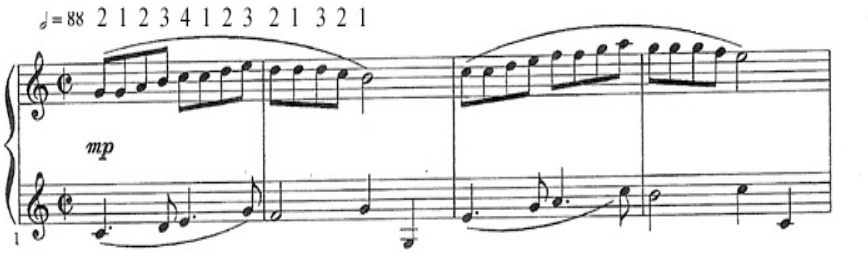
Example 6-3: *A Strange Man* by Ching-Wen Chao, Vol. 2, mm. 1–4



Example 6-4: *Little Jasmine* by Wan-Jen Hwang, Vol. 4, mm. 1–4 and mm. 9–12



Example 6-5: *Flying Cloud* by Heng-Chung Mo, Vol. 5, mm. 1–4

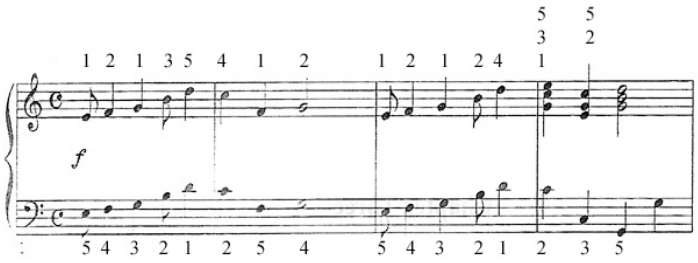


Rhythmic Exercises

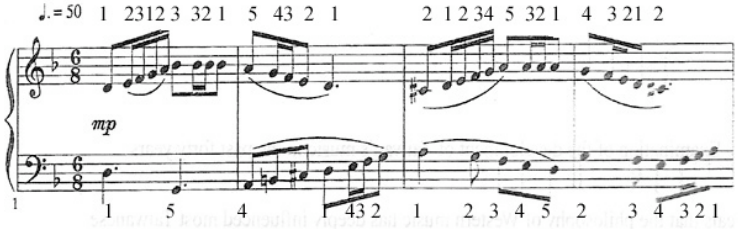
It is important to cultivate a good sense of rhythm in students' musicianship. Several pieces in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* are particularly devoted to effective and complex rhythmic exercises for beginners. For studying syncopated rhythm, students can look to Wan-Jen Hwang's *Song of Joy* (1996) found in Volume 4. This happy and syncopated exploration starts with a single-note melody that gradually expands to a chordal form (Example 6-6). The fact that it is played in chords makes the piece much more difficult and also raises the issue of

fingering. Heng-Chung Mo's *Spring Girl* (1997) in Volume 4, also an exercise in playing repeating notes in the right hand, is an exercise in 6/8 rhythm (Example 6-7). Notice that the repeated notes in the melody will sound more *legato* if played with different fingers.

Example 6-6: *Song of Joy* by Wan-Jen Hwang, Vol. 4, mm. 1–4



Example 6-7: *Spring Girl* by Heng-Chung Mo, Vol. 4, mm. 1–4

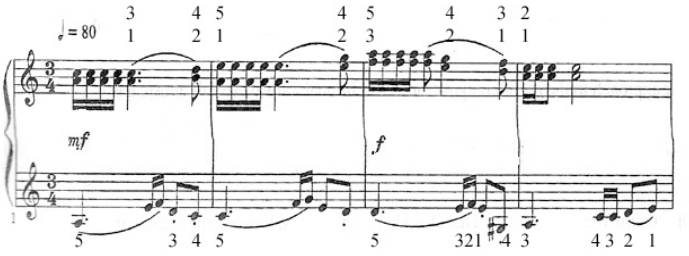


Interval Exercises

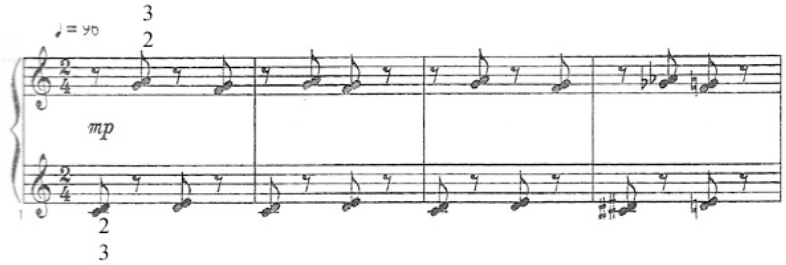
Two short pieces, *Puck* (1994) and *Nightmare* (1999), both by Heng-Chung Mo and found in Volumes 3 and 5 respectively, emphasize practicing different harmonic intervals. *Nightmare* is an exercise in thirds and sixths and requires playing repetitions with a loose wrist (Example 6-8). For the left hand, I would recommend using the same fingerings for similar phrasings. Fifth fingers, for

example, are recommended for the downbeat of each measure in the bass clef. This serves to bring out the rhythm most effectively. In *Puck*, the harmonic and melodic structures are based on major and minor seconds. Composer Mo uses simple rhythms to create a mischievous and humorous atmosphere (Example 6-9). The same fingerings can be applied throughout the entire piece.

Example 6-8: *Nightmare* by Heng-Chung Mo, Vol. 5, mm. 1–4



Example 6-9: *Puck* by Heng-Chung Mo, Vol. 3, mm. 1–4



The studies of pianistic technique examined in this chapter, selected from the pedagogical pieces collected in the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*, reveal Formusica composers' hope that Taiwan's piano students can both improve their proficiency and become accustomed to Chinese harmonies as part of their daily practice. These compositions are new and highly original, and they demonstrate how Formusica composers' concern for music education has effectively meshed

with their desire to create a modern, distinctly Taiwanese repertoire for pianists of all levels to enjoy, study and perform.

Chapter VII

Conclusion

The contents of this dissertation constitute the first systematic study of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works*, a modern collection of piano pieces created by Formusica *Arbeitsgruppe der Komponisten*. The varied compositions included in the seven volumes of the Formusica series beautifully incorporate, and thus illustrate, many facets and styles of modern compositions written by native Taiwanese composers. Through musical study and analysis of the pieces contained in the collection, one is able to recognize and better understand the development of Taiwanese contemporary music. The piano works—designed to develop good musicianship while also conveying a distinctively Taiwanese impression—also serve as effective teaching devices for beginning to advanced piano students.

A most valuable part of this study has been the opportunity to speak directly with Taiwanese composers and learn what they themselves have to say about their music. The composers responded enthusiastically in both personal and telephone interviews. Most of them were more than delighted to discuss their compositions with me, enjoying the opportunity to introduce their pieces to readers around the world. In addition to discussing their work with Formusica, some of the composers presented other pieces to me (such as chamber music, orchestral works, vocal music, and instrumental compositions) and asked if I could include these pieces in my thesis. For reasons of focusing the scope of my project, I could not incorporate

these excellent works here; however, I believe these native composers' creations are worth exploring and would be truly interesting to study. Formusica composers, in addition to devoting themselves to compositions for Taiwanese music students, also write large-scale opuses for concerts and international competitions. Dedicated to composing for native music students as a long-term mission, the men and women of Formusica will continue to search in their writing and in their work to continue to develop innovative and unprecedented musical and educational forms.

The *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* is, thus, the remarkable achievement of a small group of people, members of the Wach School, who have felt the need to carry on Taiwan's musical heritage. With the inspiration and leadership of Professor Mao-Shuen Chen, the Wach School continues to establish a living musical language which belongs to Taiwan and is as essentially modern as it is inclusive of Taiwan's cultural and historical past. I believe that the Wach School and Formusica, the leaders who began them, and the results they have achieved already in preserving native music and encouraging the composition of Taiwanese contemporary music are all truly admirable and deserving of great respect.

Appendix 1

The Contents of the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works,* Seven Volumes

FORMUSICA. *New Taiwan Music Piano Works,* 1. Taipei: WACH, 1994.

1. *Suburbs of a Village*
2. *Ox-Cart*
3. *Sonatina No. 7*
4. *12 Variations*
5. *Good Friends*
6. *Dance*
7. *Monster*
8. *Small Dance*
9. *Dance*
10. *Listening to the Rain*
11. *Ostinato*
12. *Conscious*
13. *Dance*
14. *Ostinato*
15. *Innocence*
16. *Playgame*

Composers: Chin-Yow Lin, Long-Kwang Hsieh, Chi-Hung Cheng, Yen-Ming Wey, Tung-Yu Su, Wan-Chen Hwang

FORMUSICA. *New Taiwan Music Piano Works,* 2. Taipei: WACH, 1995.

1. *A Strange Man*
2. *The Little Monkey*
3. *A Little Fish*
4. *Two Birds*
5. *Snake Dance*
6. *Flying*
7. *The Autumn Moon and Spring Breezes*
8. *Skipping Rope*
9. *Boating*
10. *Invention*
11. *Pretty Country Suite*
12. *Five-eight Time*
13. *Pur Sah Marn*
14. *The Snail*
15. *Taoist Exorcist*
16. *Rolling Marble*
17. *Hide-and-Seek*
18. *Chinese Double Fugue* (Theme from *Su-Wu-Mu-Yan*)

Composers: Ching-Wen Chao, Wan-Jen Hwang, Long-Kwang Hsieh, Chin-Yow Lin, Tung-Yu Su, Ya-Fen Chen, Fan-Ling Su, Chi-Hung Cheng

FORMUSICA. *New Taiwan Music Piano Works,* 3. Taipei: WACH, 1996.

1. *Ring the Morning Bell*
2. *A Little Waltz*
3. *A Little March*
4. *Bubble*
5. *Voglia*
6. *The Drops*
7. *The Festival*
8. *Ancient City Tour*
9. *Springtime Frolic*
10. *Lantern Play*
11. *Small Dance*
12. *Procession of the Deities*
13. *Playing with Tops*
14. *Chinese Double Fugue*
15. *Puck*
16. *Dream*

Composers: Yen-Ming Wey, Wan-Jen Hwang, Tung-Yu Su, Ching-Wen Chao, Long-Kwang Hsieh, Shih-Jung Lo, Fan-Ling Su, Ya-Feng Cheng, Heng-Chung Mo

FORMUSICA. *New Taiwan Music Piano Works,* 4. Taipei: WACH, 1999.

1. *Stair Climbing*
2. *Triple Jump*
3. *Snake Dance*
4. *Fish travels in the river*
5. *Waltz*
6. *Spring Girl*
7. *Party*
8. *Dance Music*
9. *The Late Autumn*
10. *Little Jasmine*
11. *Round Dance*
12. *Gentle Breeze*
13. *Song of Joy*
14. *Field Suite*
15. *Chords*
16. *Tian Tihng Sha*
17. *Double Inventions*
18. *Capriccio*
19. *Spring Sunbeam*
20. *Dream of Love*
21. *A Little Drama*
22. *Legend*
23. *Happy New Year*
24. *Divination*
25. *Sedan Carrying*

Composers: Heng-Chung Mo, Wan-Chen Hwang, Chin-Yow Lin, Tung-Yu Su, Shih-Jung Lo, Long-Kwang Hsieh, Yen-Ming Wey, Fan-Ling Su

FORMUSICA. *New Taiwan Music Piano Works,* 5. Taipei: WACH, 2000.

1. *Getting up*
2. *Song of Wind*
3. *Flying Cloud*
4. *Playing*
5. *I-Shiou*
6. *Nightmare*
7. *Running*
8. *Tap Dance*
9. *Playing Gong and Drum*
10. *Small Dance*
11. *Happy song*
12. *Story*
13. *Ballad*
14. *Dance*
15. *Eurhythmics*
16. *Etude No. 1*
17. *Etude No. 2*
18. *Etude No. 3*
19. *Etude No. 4*
20. *Etude No. 5*
21. *Drunk in the wind*
22. *Crossing the Fire*
23. *A Dragonfly*
24. *A Little Fish*
25. *The March of the Ants*
26. *Barcarolle*
27. *Two Kinds of Mood (1)*
28. *Two Kinds of Mood (2)*
29. *A Water Wheel*
30. *Delivery*
31. Untitled
32. *Echo's Exploration*

Composers: Heng-Chung Mo, Ming-Yi Hsu, Tung-Yu Su, Fan-Ling Su, Wen-Pin Lee, Shih-Jung Lo, Long-Kwang Hsieh, Chin-Yow Lin

FORMUSICA. *New Taiwan Music Piano Works,* 6. Taipei: WACH, 2000.

1.*Two Frogs*
2.The Butterfly
3.*Game of Turtle and Rabbit*
4.*Fantasy of Dumbo and Mickey Mouse*
5.*Dragon and Lion Dances*
6.*For Fourths*
7.*For Fifths*
8.Dancing Fairies
9. *The Atmosphere*
10. *A Little Frog by the Pond*
11. *A Little Toad under a Lotus Leaf*
12. *A Fairy by the Creek*
13. *Little Dew on a Lotus Leaf*
14. *The Cottage by the Lake*
15. *A Great Event*

Composers: Wen-Pin Lee, Fan-Ling Su, Ghing-Yu Hsiao, Wan-Jen Hwang, Yen-Ming Wey, Chin-Yow Lin, Long-Kwang Hsieh

FORMUSICA. *New Taiwan Music Piano Works,* 7. Taipei: WACH, 2002.

1. *Hopscotch*
2. *Stilt Walking*
3. *Battles On Horse Back*
4. *Imagery "Five"*
5. *Shadow by the Willows*
6. *The Animal Rhapsody*
7. Short Piece I
8. Short Piece II
9. *Winter Dance*
10. *Divertimento*
11. *13 Beat*
12. *The Sound of Drums from the Forest*
13. *Variations of Y2K*
14. *Sonata*

Composers: Mao-Shuen Chen, Chin-Yow Lin, Wen-Pin Lee, Ghing-Yu Hsiao, Chi-Hung Cheng, Tung-Yu Su, Heng-Chung Mo, Long-Kwang Hsieh

Appendix 2:

The Birth Years of Composers from the *New Taiwan Music Piano Works* Discussed in this Paper.

Chao, Ching-Wen	1973
Chen, Mao-Shuen	1936
Cheng, Chi-Hung	1965
Cheng, Ya-Feng	1968
Hsiao, Ghing-Yu	1966
Hsieh, Long-Kwang	1943
Hwang, Wan-Jen	1970
Lin, Chin-yow	1948
Mo, Heng-Chung	1965
Su, Fan-Ling	1962
Su, Tung-Yu	1963
Yen, Wey-Ming	1966

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