

# The Current Perspectives and Piano Accompaniment of Guangdong Opera

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## Abstracts

The Guangdong Opera is a significant musical composition that emphasises the importance of piano accompaniment in Chinese opera. This article aims to explain that the accompanist's role is to provide piano accompaniment that supports and validates the vocal rendition, elevating the vocalist's voice for close companionship and conversation. The Guangdong Opera is a traditional Chinese art form that emphasises the importance in Chinese opera. This article aims to explain that the role of accompanist in Cantonese opera vocal singing is to provide piano accompaniment, imitate the accompaniment of the band, support and assist vocal performance, and improve the singer's voice to achieve a tacit understanding.

A study suggests that computer-generated accompanists should adjust their performance to match that of a soloist, but it is crucial for the two musicians to collaborate in shaping the performance. Accompanists in educational institutions must possess specific expertise and competencies related to performing arts, such as breath control, resonance cavity, articulation, and respiration. The design and implementation of a piano-assisted automated accompaniment system can regulate the acoustic quality of a pianist performing opera, ensuring high-quality performances.

**Keywords:** Piano Accompaniment; Guangdong Opera; Chinese opera

## Rationale

Guangdong Opera, a traditional Chinese opera, is the largest type in Guangdong and Guangxi Guangdong dialect areas. It is one of the three oldest dramatic art forms in the world, dating back to ancient China. Guangdong Opera, also known as Yueju or Jyut Opera, is a representative of the intangible cultural heritage of mankind. It is popular in China's Guangdong Province, southern Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Hong Kong, Macau, and Southeast Asia, Australia, and the United States. (Gong, 2022) The origin of Guangdong Opera can be traced back to Emperor Jiajing's reign and continued to evolve with the addition of local music. The development of Guangdong Opera has been supported by the Ministry of Culture, it was listed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list in 2009 with a nationwide survey of local opera types in 2015 revealing 348 types. (Guangdong Opera Heritage, 2023). Chinese international young people, often referred to as Chinese, have little interest in traditional Cantonese entertainment, such as Guangdong Opera and Cantonese preaching films, instead being attracted by foreign mass media. Teaching Guangdong Opera has long been a topic of great interest in various fields, with Dr. Zhang stating that contemporary Hong Kong Guangdong Opera schools have a unique artistic form and inheritance system. (Guangdong Opera Heritage, 2023). Yuen Siu-fai, an old-guard Guangdong Opera performer, explains that there are only three or four left who learned the craft the old way. The Centre for Guangdong Opera Heritage Studies at the Education

University of Hong Kong launched the first "Yueju Accomp" app in March 2023. (Luo, & Leung, 2023: 102-117). It provides the possibility for Cantonese opera amateurs who do not play Musical Instruments to participate in learning and performing Cantonese opera, and provides the possibility for creating new Cantonese opera accompaniment modes. The problems of Guangdong Opera include a lack of valid assessment methods, limited audience engagement, especially among young people, although government-led reforms have had a positive impact on traditional art forms, there has been a lack of promotion in teaching materials. the impact of government-led reforms on the traditional art form. Current assessments in Cantonese opera are subjective and lack multidimensionality, hindering the teaching and learning of the art form. To ensure its inheritance and development, it is crucial to introduce the art form to young people. However, government involvement has led to homogenization and institutionalisation, resulting in changes in the performances and social lives of musicians.

In the field of music education, Butler et al. (2007: 241-253) proposed a conceptual model featuring issues of teaching multicultural music in the classroom using five primary categories: teacher, student, content, instruction, and context. Leung & Leung (2017: 281-306) In terms of learning motivation in learning the Guangdong opera with a teacher-artist partnership approach to students in Hong Kong schools. the partnership was found to be an appropriate and effective approach in teaching the ethnic genre for its “role supplementation” between the teacher and the artist. A Cantonese Opera may have almost as many versions as there are performances because performers may freely change the script in order to suit the performance environment; the issue of establishing a text, therefore, is by no means simple and straightforward. The most widely popular version of the recording is the authoritative interpretation, its easy accessibility offers the reader an opportunity to follow the performance and relate textual meaning and musical expression.(Yung, 1983: 439–456)

The sole professional school of higher learning in music, Xinghai Conservatory of Music (hereinafter referred to as Xinghai), adjacent to Hong Kong and Macao, is situated in South China. It serves as a foundation for the transmission of Cantonese opera and other fine traditional Chinese cultures to regular institutions under the Ministry of Education. Established in 1957, the institution has been in operation for more than 66 years, encouraging diligent work, cautious decision-making, and ethical regard for one's profession. The institution has 285 acres across its two campuses, University Town in Guangzhou and Shahe Campus in Shahe. In 2017, the Xinghai Conservatory of Music headed the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Education and Arts Development Alliance. In 2023, the Xinghai Conservatory of Music, the Education University of Hong Kong, and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Cantonese Opera Development Alliance will jointly organise the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Cantonese Opera Heritage and Communication Development Forum. The forum's goals are to support cultural exchanges, teaching and knowledge transfer, programmes and activities related to the development of Cantonese opera, and the inheritance, study, and promotion of Cantonese opera. (Guangzhou campus, 2022)

Ouyong (1981) Gathering folk music from across the globe, pouring for a time, adjusting standard tones, converting musical instruments, creating musical scores, and assembling Chinese harmony using Western music as a guide. As a band, including the percussion and music sections, we need to establish clear roles and develop collaboration and a division of labour. The band's responsibility is to completely outperform the vocalist while supporting her. To put it another way, singing is the topic and accompaniment is the aim; they

are not interchangeable. Gong outlined the four components that make up the Guangdong opera accompaniment key: Observe, Literally, it means to obey, obey, obey. When it comes to Guangdong music accompaniment, the singer leads and the companion follows. In other words, hear clearly first, then move; or listen first, move after. similar, Its literal meaning is to be orderly, precise, parallel, same, and comparable. Singing and accompaniment are done concurrently in Guangdong accompaniment. complement. Mend is often utilised as a complement in the Guangdong opera accompaniment. The top and lower melodies may join simultaneously when the melodic tones are shorter. and lead, it serves as a means of connection in the Guangdong music accompaniment. The tune that follows is the result of the additional header. (Gong, 1998) In order to analyse the upper and lower sentences of the lyrics and to participate in Guangdong opera accompaniment, we must first study about the structure of Guangdong opera and get acquainted with the features of the rotation of different plate cavities and their linking laws. (CAI, 2003: 37–38)

Piano accompaniment is a vital component in the study of ethnic instrumental music, preserving national characteristics and achieving harmony between the accompaniment and solo part. It involves analysing music materials like melody, tonality, and melody, and using multi-part music to achieve unity. Skilled arpeggios, triplet, and seven liaison playing skills are essential for promoting the atmosphere and timbre of the music. (Kaikai, & Sornyai, 2022: 140-152). Piano accompaniment helps teachers train students' artistic achievement and improve their basic teaching ability in class. Chinese piano accompaniment enhances the emotional impact of ethnic instrumental music. (Zou, 2020) National instrumentalists and piano accompaniment must constantly improve their literary accomplishments and artistic attainments while understanding the cultural and artistic characteristics of each nation and local customs.

Piano accompaniment plays an important role in teaching and learning ethnic instrumental music. It involves a strong cooperation consciousness between the accompaniment and the master, focusing on the music style, harmonic texture, and form structure. The strict piano accompaniment should be rigorous and standard. This collaboration helps to strengthen the understanding of the music and overcome difficulties. Teaching and learning are crucial in mastering piano accompaniment and ethnic instruments teaching skills. (Li, 2018: 145) By coordinating piano accompaniment and instrumental performance, students can understand the works more profoundly and bring the audience more profound auditory enjoyment. The important role of piano accompaniment in the practice of ethnic instrumental music is to enhance the emotion of the music, relieve psychological pressure, and make the performance process more relaxed, confident, and enjoyable. (Xiaole, 2021: 156-159). The accompaniment is arranged on the basis of music materials such as tonality, speed, and strength, supplementing the music works.

The piano accompaniment of ethnic instrumental works benefits from the artistic expression of 19th century German and French songs, which was introduced into China in the 20th century. It contains a large number of sound patterns and playing skills, such as intervals, chords, scales, arpeggios, skipping sounds, and decorative sounds. (Li, 2018: 144-147) Piano accompaniment plays an important role in teaching and learning ethnic instrumental music. It involves a strong cooperation consciousness between the accompaniment and the master, focusing on the music style, harmonic texture, and form structure. This collaboration helps to strengthen the understanding of the music and overcome difficulties. Teaching and learning are crucial in mastering piano accompaniment and ethnic instruments teaching skills. (Lihan, &

Thothum, 2020). By coordinating piano accompaniment and instrumental performance, students can understand the works more profoundly and bring the audience more profound auditory enjoyment. The strict piano accompaniment should be rigorous and standard, based on ethnic instrumental music. The important role of piano accompaniment in the practice of ethnic instrumental music is to enhance the emotion of the music, relieve psychological pressure, and make the performance process more relaxed, confident, and enjoyable.

Interviews with specialists, including Liang Yongjian and Dai Xiaojing, Since the development of traditional Chinese opera, the accompaniment does not need a large band, and the composition of the band is sufficient for 4-7 people. The orchestra does not need a conductor. They believe that it is meaningful for music schools or music majors to teach Guangdong opera in pianoaccompanied version of ditty by adapting the classical highlights of traditional Guangdong opera with piano accompaniment.lead them to conclude that this traditional Guangdong opera is a piano-accompanied folding opera. It makes sense to teach Guangdong opera using the piano accompaniment version of the Guangdong music scores to students enrolled in music schools or majoring in music. It is an example of tearing down boundaries and bringing traditional Guangdong opera to a wider audience. Piano accompaniment teaching in China faces several problems. One issue is the lack of Chinese harmony and folk song content in impromptu accompaniment lessons, which hinders students' abilities in this area. 1) The traditional elite private teaching model, which fails to meet the demands of piano teaching and music teacher employment in primary and secondary schools. 2) There is a lag in the traditional piano teaching model, preventing students from fully experiencing the charm of the piano and hindering their theoretical and practical development. 3) Western piano tutor books in China, even those written by Chinese musicians,perpetuates Western hegemonic views of Chinese music and cultural assimilation.

Guangdong opera faces several problems in music colleges. One issue is the lack of that there are few complete scores with piano accompaniment on the score, lead to the popularity of singing is low. 1) Fails to meet the demands of music teaching and music teacher employment in primary and secondary schools. 2) There is a lag in the traditional Guangdong opera teaching mode leads to low teaching efficiency and hinders the development of students' learning theory and practice of Cantonese opera. 3) Western piano tutor books in China, even those written by Chinese musicians,perpetuates Western hegemonic views of Chinese music and cultural assimilation.

These issues highlight the need for reform in piano education in China, including the incorporation of Chinese harmony and folk songs folk music elements, the development of practical and innovative capabilities, and the promotion of multicultural music education. Thus, the current perspectives, Guangdong Opera piano accompaniment teaching places emphasis on the presentation of To enhance the musical works, the accompaniment is structured according to the elements of music materials such as the singer's skill level, melody, harmony and rhythm, supplementing the music works.

## Detail

Studying the background and significance of each Guangdong opera and learn about the location of Guangdong opera accompaniment is the first step in teaching accompaniment on the piano. Next, learn about the Guangdong Opera's pianist's the position of accompaniment, and then go into detail concerning the vocalists, tonality, speed, and strength supplementing the music works.

### **Pianoist's Accompaniment: or Accompanist:**

An accompanist is a person who plays a piece of music on the piano to accompany the primary performer, who serves as the centre of attention throughout the performance. This performer might be a dancer, a vocalist, another musician, or a group of singers and/or dancers. An accompaniment is provided by the piano accompaniment. accompanist. Jordanous & Smaill (2009: 197-209.) Summary of role of score following in automatic musical accompaniment. The study explores the role of score following in automatic musical accompaniment, a method that allows a computer-generated accompanist to adapt to a soloist's performance. However, the study also raises questions about the musical interaction between soloist and accompanist, suggesting the importance of sharing the performance's shape between musicians rather than treating the accompanist as purely subservient.

A piano accompanist must possess proficiency in various areas such as sight-reading, transposition, playing orchestral reductions, and reading from open scores. They must also possess ample and proficient technique, including supreme legato, useful fingering, a developed kinesthetic sense of the keyboard, and knowledge and fluency in producing sound. Tonal beauty, with sensitive touch and colorful variety, is of paramount importance for accompanists. They must blend their tone with that of the soloist, following even the slightest inflections. Intelligent and sensitive listening play a critical role in the production of tone in collaborative performance. (Kokotsaki, 2007: 641-668). Collaborative ensemble between the soloist and piano accompanist is essential for successful collaboration. The accompanist must project himself into the mood of the soloist, feeling the piece in the same way. A sympathetic and responsive temperament is crucial for accompanists to anticipate the soloist's effects and produce the exact effect required. Breath is the primary building block of successful collaboration, providing and preserving a natural flow to the music around which accompanists may arrange their playing and phrasing. Accompanists must bring sensitivity both to phrases with a soloist and to the intervening material between their phrases, handling the exit and entrance of their co-performer with great care. Listening skills are also important for accompanists, as they must be aware of sound both inward (created by oneself) and outward (that of the soloist). Interpretive knowledge and performance experience with varied and extensive repertoire are also desirable competencies. Familiarity with the sounds and mechanics of languages is also emphasized. (Sasanfar, 2012: 24-26).

Chinese national vocal music works have many imitations of sounds other than piano, orchestral orchestration, and the sound of nature. The piano accompaniment also needs to adjust and change the timbre continuously according to the emotion and situation of the national vocal music works, such as the contrast of light and dark, rigid and soft, strong and weak, and transparency. (Feng, 2018: 104–113) The Chinese concept of harmony is also very different from that of the West: the player does not seem to have anything like a score; one plays from memory or from notes, while the other accompanies him according to the best harmonic idea he can grasp. In order to solve the coordination relationship between horizontal melody and vertical multiple sounds in music creation, modern Chinese composers began to

discuss the national style of harmony in the mid-late 1940s and worked on the *pentatonic scale* and its harmony, as well as on *the sound group theory* and *harmony* proposed in the 1980s. (Zhao, 2012)

Singing Guangdong opera works requires a strong command of the lyrics and phonetic symbols of Cantonese, according to experts. One of the most significant dialects in south China is the Guangzhou dialect. The general Guangzhou dialect, which is the Cantonese representative dialect, is sometimes referred to as the "vernacular" and "Guangfu dialect," which belongs to Guangfu film of Guangdong dialect and is the representative dialect of Cantonese. It is a part of the Guangdong dialect and is called Guangfu film. Cantonese hasn't altered much since the Yuan, Ming, and Qing eras. The Guangzhou dialect has its own distinct phonetic features that set it apart from Putonghua and other dialects. On the one hand, it inherits and preserves the traits of ancient Chinese, but it also absorbs some non-Chinese components from southern China. Guangzhou has nine tones, whereas Mandarin has four. The Guangzhou dialect is a vital conduit for regional culture within the Cantonese-speaking community. (Guangdong Opera, 2024)

Barnes (2020: 1-14) Summary of music direction (MD) and piano accompaniment in musical theatre: a practical guide. The importance of music direction in musical theatre is often overlooked, leading to a lack of resources and universities offering degrees. This guide provides a practical "how to" guide for music directors, focusing on common responsibilities, rehearsal preparation, and communication with the theatre company, director, choreographer, and band members. It also discusses personal philosophies on training and skill sets, including sight reading, adaptability, collaboration, dramatic timing, acting, basic conducting, vamps, and safeties. The guide is designed to be applicable to both novice and accomplished music directors and accompanists. This project focuses on the responsibilities of a music director and accompanist in musical theatre, including familiarizing oneself with the material, learning the story, characters, arc, vibe, writers, and composers. MDs should exercise humility and curiosity by listening to the original cast recording of a show, understanding the story and characters, and considering the structure of each song, subtext, and character melodies or instruments throughout the show.

Research by Sasanfar (2012: 30-54). Summary of Influence of aural and visual expressivity of the accompanist on audience perception of expressivity in collaborative performances of a soloist and pianist. Researchers have created a score follower accompaniment system using a Hidden Markov Model (HMM) to track a soloist's progress through a musical score. The system uses beat tracking to anticipate the soloist's next note and allows for fluctuations in tempo. This approach requires more Hidden Markov Models than a note-based one but offers advantages in beat tracking, direct note length modeling, and ease of implementation. The researchers conducted qualitative evaluations and tested the system using quantitative criteria from the Music Information Retrieval Evaluation eXchange conferences. The system was developed using Max/MSP and uses a HMM to estimate the performer's state based on a sequence of musical events. Accompanists play a crucial role in educational institutions, particularly children's art schools, and their preparation for concertmaster work is essential.

The accompanist's skills are developed through a developed sense of rhythm and rhythmic pulsation, which is common to all members of the ensemble. In children's art school vocal or choral classes, the accompanist may be offered to play the accompaniment not in the key in which the notes are printed, due to the tessitura capabilities of voices and the state of

the vocal apparatus of children at the moment. (Sasanfar, 2012: 44-67). The accompanist's work in the conditions of children's art schools differs from the general tradition, requiring special universalism, mobility, and the ability to quickly switch to work with students of different specialties. They must have a deep knowledge of the musical repertoire, extreme sensitivity to professional actions of performers, and a certain pedagogical knowledge, experience, and talent to perform the functions of an equal participant in the performance and pedagogical process.

Based on the aforementioned account, it can be concluded that the accompanist's responsibility is to provide piano accompaniment in the background while the singer sings, thereby assisting and endorsing the vocal performance, and elevating the voice to the point where the vocalist can converse with a close companion during performances or other activities. Developed a model to explain performance quality in orchestras involving pianists or piano accompanying framework. (Kokotsaki, 2007: 641-668). Five areas identified:

1. Searching for balance: Musical balance, human relationship, and performance interpretation.
2. Externalization of attention: Visual, aural communication, technical, and social skills.
3. Regulating: Balancing pianist and accompanist roles and responsibility.
4. Time availability: Individual and ensemble rehearsal time or familiarity with repertoire.
5. Achieving integration: Partnership with soloist and audience's response.

### **Vocal Skills for Opera Style**

Research by Youlin Ye (2022: 899-907) Summary of the Singing Skills and Artistic Treatment of Choral Works with Chinese Traditional Opera Style. This paper explores the singing skills and artistic treatment of choral works with Chinese traditional opera style, focusing on breathing, articulation, tune use, and ornamental tune. It combines literature analysis and singing practice to analyze the essentials of these works, aiming to improve the artistic connotation and understanding of these unique choral works.

**Breathing:** Diaphragmatic breathing, also referred to as "belly breathing," is a breathing method in which the diaphragm, "the primary muscle of respiration," is purposefully compressed downward to increase the amount of air that reaches the lungs ("Diaphragm and Lungs"). When diaphragmatic breathing is done properly, it feels more like you're inhaling into your belly than your chest or lungs. Breathing in this way improves breath control and voice quality ("How To Sing From Your Diaphragm..."). (Barnes, 2020: 53)

A vital component of vocalisation in Chinese opera style singing is thoracic breathing, often referred to as chest breathing. It entails raising the external intercostal muscles and extending the lung area via the lateral expansion of the ribs. Driving inspiration and reversing movement for expiration need the use of this approach. By actively expanding the belly outward, abdominal breathing causes the diaphragm to descend and compress its sub-organs, forcing the upper lung to expand outward in order to inhale. A more methodical approach to singing breathing is the Combine with Chest and Abdominal Breathing. (Youlin, 2022: 899-907) While the chorus's breathing technique is similar to most works, it is also distinctive. The muscles of the belly and ribs regulate the amount and direction of breath, and the Subglottal pressure plays a major role in how well a person breathes. The vocalist has to develop control over Expiratory Force and Grottal Resistance in order to regulate Subglottic pressure and breathing volume. For all singers performing in Chinese opera style, enough resistance from the vocal cords is essential for a powerful voice, and effective breathing training is a top concern. A weak voice may arise from employing both sets of muscles, but a

loose vocal fold structure or posterior fissure of the vocal fold can be caused by engaging just one set.

Chinese opera uses Qi, a classic Chinese musical method, to create a unique chorus composition that demonstrates breathing. Chinese opera choruses have a vocal style that combines characteristics of both Chinese and Western conventional opera, while maintaining its own identity. In a Chinese opera performance, Qi is used, stored, and transformed. Chinese opera singers have honed a variety of singing techniques and experiences, including "In-taking Qi," "Dantian Qi (deep breath)," "Stealing Qi," "Relieving Qi," and "Lifting Qi." (Xie, 2010: 69-74). In syncopated beats and dotted notes, stealing Qi is a brief breath supplement that is intended to relieve tension conveyed by syncopation and calm emotions via a brief pause. The "intonation" of Chinese poetry, the "coherent connotation" of Chinese traditional paintings, and the "consistent emotion expression" of Chinese traditional music are all aspects of the traditional Chinese aesthetic, which is strongly tied to this creative form. The Chinese opera chorus employs Qi to maintain a laid-back but energetic performance, synchronise inspiration and expiry, and create a cohesive musical picture. One of the most important aspects of Chinese opera is the usage of Qi, which combines aspects of Western and Chinese culture.

**The relationship between “word” and “tone”:** In Chinese opera, the "word" and "tune" are essential components for accurate and clear pronunciation. The word consists of two parts: vowel and consonant, which are crucial for vocalization training. The pronunciation of consonants is more complex due to the diversity and particularity of the consonant system in the world. The scientific sound production of Chinese opera is based on the cooperation of breath, articulation, and resonance cavity. The uniqueness of opera sound is reflected in the different timbre caused by the use of resonance cavity. In China, the voice pursues "clear articulation, high voice, bright and powerful voice," which requires deep, strong breath support and the use of resonance cavity. (Long & Xie, 2020: 63-66). The sound production in Chinese opera emphasizes the "sound goes through the top," which involves the singer focusing on the resonance of the head cavity when singing every sound and word in all vocal zones. The "back-brain sound" is a high-position sound-producing method, making the sound go through and having a good mixed resonance effect. For example, *Mulan* is arranged from national vocal music songs with Henan opera style, requiring the singers to ensure the deep breath of the chorus and the resonance of the chest and oral cavity as support.

Opera styles in China have unique pronunciation and articulation characteristics, reflecting the diversity of opera styles. The Chinese characters, one of the few languages with tones, emphasize the "tonal pattern antithesis and tone unity" in poetry and opera. Operas based on different language families should follow the tone law of their mother tongue, as negative pronunciation can confuse the audience about the word meaning and lyric sound and rhyme. Conductors and singers must be familiar with this rule when dealing with negative pronunciation of lyrics, as it can lead to confusion about the word meaning and lyric sound and rhyme. For example, in the early stage of rehearsal of *Liang Hongyu*, the choir adds an appoggiatura when singing the lyric with the Chinese characters "yuan and yang" to create a "lubricating tone" in the opera. Therefore, when dealing with choirs with opera style, it is crucial to study the vocalization rule of each language to achieve both "rhyme" and "meaning."

Research by Zheng, & Fang (2021: 151-161) Summary of A Study on Singing Techniques of Sheng and Dan in Chinese Qiong Opera. The Qiong opera, a traditional Chinese drama, has been declining due to unscientific vocalization. A survey interview method and comparative analysis method were used to study vocalizing characteristics of five role types:



Sheng (voice), Dan (voice), and bel canto (bel canto). The study found that Qiong opera actors had technical problems, such as slackness, high throat positions, unclear tone, and improper resonance. The study also suggested that lessons could be drawn from bel canto on four aspects: chest and abdominal breathing method, throat states, mixed resonance, and articulation skills. By comparing Qiong opera vocalization techniques with bel canto, lessons can be drawn to improve Qiong opera singing.

**Situation of Qiong Opera Performers' Vocalization:** Qiong opera is a captivating performance that combines traditional skills of song, speech, dance, and combat. The Chinese language's polysyllabic nature makes the sounds complex and changeable, putting pressure on actors' mouths, jaws, throats, and vocal cords. Li. (2019: 60-174) A survey interview method was used to study five troupes: Joan theater Hainan Province, Haikou City Qiong Opera Performing Arts Co. Ltd, Wenchang Qiong Opera Troupe, Qionghai Qiong Opera Troupe, and Chengmai Qiong Opera Troupe. The study found that Qiong opera performers face difficulties in using their true voice and falsetto, as they struggle to achieve a natural transition between the two. Long-term rehearsals and performances can lead to vocal cord fatigue, especially when using only their true voices. To improve their singing, actors should learn vocal skills and use head, oral, and chest cavity resonances appropriately. Addressing these vocal barriers can help actors make better use of their voices, ensure natural flow, show outstanding expressive ability, and better shape characters.

#### **Music elements in piano accompaniment: Melody, Harmony and Rhythm**

As for singing, the hundreds of tunes used in Cantonese Opera may be divided into two categories, based both on historical development and on musical structure. The first category, called Siukuk (literally, small tunes). The second category of tunes, called Bongwong, is historically linked to the tunes used in Peking Opera and other regional operas. (Yung, 1989). The Flower Princess, A Cantonese Opera by Tong Dik Sang. To control the tonal of a pianist accompanying singing opera, a piano-assisted automated accompaniment system can be designed and applied to control the tonal of a pianist accompanying singing opera. The complete traditional Chinese gongche scores: "ho, si, yi, shang, che, gung, faan, liu", it's equivalent to "(G) sol, (A) la, (B) ti, (C) do, (D) re, (E) mi, (F) fa, (G) sol", but the B is lower than Ti and the anti-pitch is less than Fa. There are 5 scales in common use, "Main line", literally: regular line. in approximately the key of C in Western music, C major in Guangdong Opera, same as "yi faan". The "opposite line" of a representative verse is adopted. Opposite line, in approximately the key of G in Western music, G major in Guangdong Opera; literally: opposite line, two key notes: G and D. The other two "si gung" "che wu" are the main notes of B flat and F. (figure 1) (Yung, 1983: 439-456).



**Figure, 1 Interval**

Table 1: Mode-Model Note (Wang, 2017).

Name of Mode	Model Notes
Gong diao	C-D-E-G-A
Shang diao	D-E-G-A-C
Jue diao	E-G-A-C-D
Zhi diao	G-A-C-D-E
Yu diao	A-C-D-E-G

The fundamental five notes are the basic elements of the diao. In Chinese music, diao had many meanings. It is similar to a key in Western music or also could mean mode. Diao can be delineated as the gong diao, the shang diao, the jue diao, the zhi diao, and the yu diao. And these compendium terms encompass both key and mode. If a piece is in the gong diao, the primary note is the gong note, which is similar to the tonic in Western music theory. The main mode is the gong pentatonic scale, such as gong, shang, jue, zhi, yue, and equated with do, re, mi, sol, and la. The music usually starts in the main mode and also ends in the main mode. (Table 1)

To control the tonal of a pianist accompanying singing opera, a piano-assisted automated accompaniment system can be designed and applied to control the tonal of a pianist accompanying singing opera. This system generates piano vocal weaves, allowing for pop songwriting. (Hasebe, 2012: 1246). A controlled music generation neural network model can solve discrete integrability and limited control domain issues in music generation tasks. Virtual damper position data can be generated based on key-on, key-off, released, damper pedal position, and sostenute pedal-on data, achieving tonal control. (Lin, & Zhao, :2022).

Pianists can control the speed of their piano playing by enhancing their motor skill and feedforward control modulation. Extensive training in piano can strengthen neuromuscular coupling between fingers, allowing for coordinated finger movements. Motor imagery-based brain-computer interface (BCI) systems can be used to interact with the piano and control the speed through mental imagery tasks. (Kimoto et al., 2022: 709-724). By detecting electrical brain activity patterns, BCI systems translate these patterns into control signals, allowing pianists to effectively control the speed of their playing for opera performances.

Pianists can enhance their playing strength by adjusting the playing strength of their piano keys, ensuring a high-quality performance for singers in opera. This can be achieved using a piano key playing strength adjusting device, which allows for convenient adjustments without removing the keys. . (Hasebe, 2012: 1246). Coordination and understanding between piano accompaniment and vocal singers are crucial for high-quality performance. The piano accompaniment should complement and harmonize with vocal singing for vocal integration. An electronic device with a control interface can enhance the piano's intelligent operation experience, allowing for control via a mobile phone. Overall, this combination allows pianists to control their playing strength to accompany singers in opera.

Opening narration called *sibaak* in cantonese, spoken parts of a Guangdong opera is one of the two basic expression forms of opera lines, which is called "chang" in the form of singing and "Bai" in the form of reciting. It can occur before, during, or after a play, but most often in the first paragraph. Written in a style similar to five or seven characters, it is usually only two or four sentences, must rhyme, can be said in a flat throat or a small throat, and should be said in a high voice, words and rhythm. (Cantonese Opera, 2015; Yung, 1983: 439–456)

One of the interview experts, Ms. Guo Jie, suggested that piano accompaniment should follow the sound effects of traditional Guangdong opera accompaniment. The expression of opera is different from the language of daily life and has certain musicality and rhythm. In Guangdong opera music, there are drums before the spoken parts to attract the audience's attention. The actors can pause for a moment to allow the drums and gongs to join in. In the development process of Guangdong opera, Guangdong opera is good at inclusiveness, constantly absorbing fresh art forms, and borrowing familiar musical melodies to fill in new words before performing. That is, the Qupai style opera singing style has music melody first, and then fill in the song words. Fen feiyan is one of the representative. (Cantonese Opera Performance, 2015)

The effect of accompaniment style on preference and perception of performance quality in children and young adults has been explored in various studies. Children most preferred rock-based styles, while chordal piano accompaniment was the least preferred style. Studies have also examined the impact of accompaniment in educational settings on musical abilities, such as singing ability. Children who received song instruction with root melody accompaniment received significantly higher improvisation ratings than those who did not receive such instruction. (Lin & Zhao: 2022). Sight-reading ability involves perception, kinesthetic, memory, and problem-solving skills and is highly desirable for pianists. Research has found that sight-reading in an accompanying context may improve sightreading performance. Class piano students who sight-read along with a tape-recorded soloist were significantly more rhythmically accurate than students who played without the soloist. Pianists with accompanying backgrounds performed better than solo pianists, but with repeated trials or more practice, the difference in performance may diminish. It would be time-consuming and tedious to perform the whole play at once. Instead, gradually play just a few highlights from the Guangdong opera, which is focused and somewhat complete while also showcasing the actor's skill level. One of the experts, teacher Dai Xiaojing, condensed the song into two paragraphs in "opp," emphasising the singer's skills as much as possible in the song's four to five minutes.

The influence of piano accompaniment on perception of various aspects of performance quality has been investigated. Sasanfar (2012: 44-67) found that adjudicator rating scores were significantly higher for the variable 'rehearsal with accompanist'. Sheldon, Reese, and Grashel (1999: 251-265) explored the effects of different accompaniment conditions on instrumental musicians' performance quality. Music majors were assigned to practice under one of three conditions: with live accompaniment, intelligent digital accompaniment, or without accompaniment. After a 6-week practice period, the students performed a selection twice: once without accompaniment, and once in accordance with their assigned accompaniment condition. Results showed that accompanied excerpts were rated significantly higher than unaccompanied versions for phrasing/expression, rhythm, and dynamics.

### **Guangdong Opera and the Role of Piano Accompaniment: Accompanists**

Understanding Guangdong Opera: Guangdong opera is a unique musical form with orchestra accompaniment and can also use piano accompaniment. Chinese opera is a unique form of music that uses piano accompaniment.

- The accompanist performs alongside the primary performer, who is the main focus of the performance. Score Following Automatic Musical Accompaniment.
- Studies examine the role of score following in automatic musical accompaniment.

- The study highlights the significance of sharing performance shape between soloist and accompanist.

#### Music Piano Accompaniment in Opera

- Music directors are essential in music direction, focusing on common responsibilities, rehearsal preparation, and communication with the company, director, choreographer, and band members.

- The guide covers topics such as sight reading, adaptability, collaboration, dramatic timing, acting, basic conducting, vamps, and safety.

- Accompanists are necessary in educational institutions, especially children's art schools, and must be well-prepared for concertmaster duties.

- They must be able to freely read musical texts without preparation, mentally recall the entire musical and literary text, imagine the nature and mood of the music, determine the basic key and tempo, pay attention to changes in tempo, size, key, and dynamic gradations, and consider the bass line's exact coverage.

#### Chinese Opera-Style Breathing

- Effective breathing training is crucial for Chinese opera singers, as the belly and rib muscles regulate breath amount and direction, and the Subglottal pressure significantly impacts breathing quality.

#### Improving Opera Singers

- Enhancing Opera opera players were afflicted with elevated throat positions, discordant tones, and improper resonances. To better their singing, actors should hone their vocal abilities and focus on the resonances of their heads, mouths, and chest cavities. A pianist accompanying opera may have the ability to regulate the tone with the assistance of an automated accompaniment system. By altering the keys on their pianos, pianists can increase their performing strength and guarantee triumphant opera performances.

Therefore, the piano accompanists in Chinese/Guangdong Opera can be summarized as follows:

1. The pianist plays a crucial role in musical accompaniment, supporting the primary performer, includes accompanists must possess proficiency in sight-reading, transposition, playing orchestral reductions, and reading from open scores.

2. Tonal beauty, intelligent and sensitive listening, and collaborative ensemble between the soloist and piano accompanist are essential for successful collaboration.

3. The relationship between “word” and “tone” is essential for accurate and clear pronunciation in Chinese opera, and the pianists can enhance their playing strength by adjusting the playing strength of their piano keys.

4. The influence of aural and visual expressivity of the accompanist on audience perception of expressivity in collaborative performances of a soloist and pianist.

5. Accompanists play a crucial role in educational institutions, particularly children's art schools, and their preparation for concertmaster work is essential.

6. Music direction and piano accompaniment in musical theatre are often overlooked, leading to a lack of resources and universities offering degrees.

7. “How to” guide for music directors, focusing on common responsibilities, rehearsal preparation, and communication with the theatre company, director, choreographer, and band members.

8. A model was developed to explain performance quality in orchestras involving pianists or piano accompanying framework, focusing on five areas: searching for balance, externalizing of attention, regulating, time availability, and achieving integration.

9. Chinese opera style explores singing skills and artistic treatment, focusing on breathing, articulation, tune use, and ornamental tune.

10. Music directors are essential in music direction, focusing on common responsibilities, rehearsal preparation, and communication with the company, director, choreographer, and band members.

## Conclusion

The Guangdong Opera is a traditional Chinese art form that emphasises the importance in Chinese opera. This article aims to explain that the role of accompanist in Cantonese opera vocal singing is to provide piano accompaniment, imitate the accompaniment of the band, support and assist vocal performance, and improve the singer's voice to achieve a tacit understanding. A significant musical composition, the Guangdong Opera highlights the significance of piano accompaniment in Chinese opera. Throughout the performance, the accompaniment assists the principal performer, who may be a dancer, vocalist, or other musician. It is the duty of the accompanist to furnish piano accompaniment that supports and validates the vocal rendition, while also elevating the vocalist's voice to a degree that enables close companionship and conversation during performances or other engagements. A study investigates the function of score following in automatic musical accompaniment and proposes that computer-generated accompanists should adjust their performance to match that of a soloist. Nevertheless, the research also prompts inquiries regarding the musical dynamic between the soloist and accompanist, implying that rather than regarding the accompanist as a mere subordinate, it is crucial that the two musicians collaborate in shaping the performance.

Educational institutions rely heavily on accompanists, especially those that teach children's art; therefore, their preparation for concertmaster work is critical. In addition, individuals in this field should possess particular expertise and competencies pertaining to associated performing arts. These include the capacity to effortlessly peruse musical texts without premeditation, mentally retrieve the entirety of the literary and musical texts, envision the essence and atmosphere of the music, ascertain the fundamental key and tempo, attentively perceive alterations in tempo, size, key, and dynamic gradations, and consider the significance of the precise. Breath control is an essential component of singing in Chinese opera, and diaphragmatic breathing is a fundamental technique utilised to enhance both breath control and voice quality. Chinese opera's scientific sound production is achieved through the interplay between the resonance cavity, articulation, and respiration. In pursuit of "clear articulation, high voice, vibrant and forceful voice," the voice necessitates the utilisation of resonance cavity and deep, strong breath support.

The distinctiveness of Chinese opera styles in terms of pronunciation and articulation is a reflection of the styles' diversity. Actors should acquire vocal skills and employ cranium, oral, and thoracic cavity resonances appropriately in order to enhance their singing abilities. By overcoming these vocal obstacles, actors can optimise the utilisation of their vocal capabilities, establish a seamless transition, exhibit exceptional expressive prowess, and more effectively mould their characters. The design and implementation of a piano-assisted automated accompaniment system can regulate the acoustic quality of a pianist who performs opera. In music generation tasks, a controlled neural network model can resolve discrete

integrability and limited control domain issues. To achieve tonal control, virtual damper position data can be generated using damper pedal position, key-on, key-off, released, and sustained pedal-on data. By modifying the playing force of their piano keys, pianists can improve their playing strength and guarantee that opera vocalists deliver performances of the highest calibre. Effective collaboration and comprehension between vocalists and piano accompaniment are essential components of a performance of superior quality.

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