

# Overview of Huang Zi Chinses Art Songs Composition

**Ma Jun,**  
**Pakorn Rodchangphuen and Manus Kaewbucha**  
Bangkokthonburi University, Thailand  
Corresponding Author, E-mail: nicha.musiced@gmail.com

\*\*\*\*\*

## Abstract

Huang Zi is the founder of early music education, and is also one of the pioneers of Chinese art songs. He has created many representative works, absorbed the rigorous structure of western composition techniques, and has very distinct personal creation characteristics, such as Spring Thought Song, Three Wankings for Roses and Fu Deng Lou. His western composition techniques in style and harmony composition techniques, and into the traditional culture of the Chinese nation, innovation, bold breakthrough, create the many, many different themes and style of art, both realistic color and has the unique characteristics of the Chinese nation, perfect shows the extraordinary charm of the modern Chinese art songs. It also accumulated valuable composition experience for the composers, opened up new creative inspiration, played an indelible role in the further development of China's modern music culture construction and the promotion of modern professional music education, and also provided valuable materials for the study and research of professional music. This article presented the overview of Huang Zi Chinses Art Songs Composition.

**Keywords:** Overview; Huang Zi; Chinses Art Songs; Composition

## Introduction

Art song, as a unique form of singing music, originated from the European Romantic movement in the 19th century. During this period, European society, culture and art underwent profound changes, and artists began to pursue the depth and individuation of emotional expression, especially in the field of music. German and Austrian composers such as Schubert and Schumann became the pioneers of the development of art song, and they gave this musical form a new artistic character and style.

With the passage of time, many European composers have continuously explored and innovated the art song, which has gradually become an important part of the European romantic period from the 19th century to the 20th century and even today's music culture. These works not only reflect the development of the art of music, but also reflect the social, cultural and ideological changes of the era.

At the beginning of the 20th century, under the influence of the western musical art trend, the art song was introduced into China. In the 1920s and 1930s, China's music industry began to emerge a number of excellent art songs. Among them, Mr. Huang Zi is one of the important representatives of Chinese art songs. His works are not only loved by the domestic audience, but also have a wide influence in the world.

As a musical form with profound historical and cultural background, art song not only has an important position in Europe, but also has rich development and inheritance in China. It is not only a treasure of music art, but also an important part of human cultural heritage.

In early 1920, with the rise of the New Culture movement, Chinese art songs began to develop gradually. This art form is not only the precious heritage of the integration of Chinese traditional culture and Western art, but also reflects the inheritance and development of Chinese traditional music by modern and contemporary music masters. Huang Zi is one of the important representatives of this period. Although his music career only lasted 34 years, he made indelible contributions to the development of professional music in China in this short time, especially in the music activities of about ten years after returning to China. Huang Zi not only has outstanding achievements in the creation of art songs, but also plays an important role in the field of music education, cultivating a group of outstanding musical talents. His works not only integrate Eastern and western musical elements, but also deeply explore the connotation of traditional Chinese music, laying a solid foundation for the maturity of Chinese art songs. Huang Zi's musical achievements and contributions to the Chinese music industry make him an indispensable part of the history of Chinese art song development (Wang, 2017).

During this period, the creation of artistic songs in China was a prolific period. Composers not only paid attention to artistic songs, but also realized the important role of piano accompaniment in the creation of melodies. They carefully created piano accompaniment to better set off the singer's singing and make the creation of artistic songs rich in artistry and appeal. It is one of the characteristics of Chinese early art song creation. The composers of this period had a different understanding of piano accompaniment from their predecessors, who previously thought that piano accompaniment was an accessory of vocal singing and a simple follow of vocal singing. Now they draw on the creative techniques of western artistic songs, so that the creation of Chinese professional song piano accompaniment has been paid attention to and improved. This kind of fusion of Chinese and Western music is unprecedented in the previous song creation, which makes the performance and creative development of Chinese song accompaniment attempt and lays a solid foundation for the later creation and development of Chinese song accompaniment. It was from this period that vocal accompaniment was gradually promoted and applied, and the artistic value and important position of piano accompaniment were gradually reflected in practical application (Liu, 2020).

In the 20th century, with the establishment of school songs in new schools, this form of collective singing was spread, which opened the prelude to the creation of modern Chinese songs. His melodies all came from Europe and the United States, especially the tunes of Japanese songs. Listening to different lyrics reflected the patriotic thought of the rich country and the strong army to resist foreign humiliation and learn advanced western culture at that time. In this form of music, piano has naturally become an important accompaniment tool in school music teaching, and people often use it to learn singing and various musical knowledge. Therefore, piano accompaniment gradually shows its irreplaceable role in school music activities. He played a role in promoting the wide spread of school songs and people's learning of western music theory.

## **The characteristics of Chinese art songs**

The 1920s and 1940s is a historical period in which Chinese art songs have started and developed to mature. This paper takes the works of this period as an example to explore the style and characteristics of Chinese art songs in this period. From a global perspective, this period of Chinese art songs are mostly composer based on the western advanced composition skills, but valuable is our composer for western advanced composition techniques is not blind overall receive, but pay attention to "foreign", in the creation of western composition techniques and the integration of traditional Chinese national culture, and keep pace with The Times, continuous innovation, gradually open up a can reflect the Chinese national style of art song creation road. The artistic songs of this period have shown the characteristics of nationalization in various aspects of "subject matter, composition techniques, and vocal music performance"(Chen, 2008).

The nationalization of the subject matter is first reflected in the poetry with the most Chinese connotation. China is known as the great China, which has a history and culture of more than 5,000 years of civilization. The development of five thousand years has accumulated a large number of excellent poetry works, including the beautiful metaphor of "the country of poetry". These poetry works provide a steady stream of subject materials for composers to create artistic songs. As early as the 20 — 40 of the 20th century, a large number of composers successively used classical poems to create artistic songs, such as Qing Zhu, Huang Zi, Zhao Yuanren and others. Later, it was proved that these artistic songs created based on famous classical poems at that time were still the finishing works of Chinese art songs today because of their strong Chinese classical charm. Chinese art songs in the 1920s and 1940s have an obvious feature, that is, the perspective of the creation of works to the performance of real life. This is different from the European art songs with the obvious personal traces of the composer. Because of this, the Chinese art songs in this period presented a diversified phenomenon in terms of subject matter. Art songs in this period can be divided into the following four categories according to their different themes:

### (1) Art songs based on the typical content of classical and classical literature

With the typical content of classical literature, we call it the art song of ancient poetry. This work of subject matter is a very important part of Chinese art songs. His representative works include The Great East to the East (Song, Su Shi Ci), Huang Zi's Dian Jiang Lips, Fu Deng Lou (Song, Wang Zhuo Ci), and Hua Fei Hua (Tang, Bai Juyi Ci), etc.

### (2) Art songs with the theme of the typical content in modern literature

The art songs of modern literature can also be called lyric art songs. When creating art songs of this subject, the composer pays attention to the description of the inner feelings of the characters and carefully depicts the inner world of the characters, which is the same as the characteristics of European art songs focusing on "people", that is, with obvious personal traces. Therefore, this type of Chinese art songs is not only an important part of Chinese art songs in the 20th century, but also a part of the most western characteristics of all types of Chinese art songs in the 20th century. His representative works include Huang Zi's "Spring Si Song" (Wei Hanzhang Ci), Xiao Youmei's "Ask" Zhao Yuanren's "Teach Me How to Think of Him" (Liu Bannong Ci), Huang Zi's "Three Wings for Roses" (Wei Hanzhang Ci) and so on

(3) art songs with patriotism as the themes

Because the art songs with the theme of patriotism are closest to the reality of the realistic society and China, we can also call the works of this theme realistic art songs. His representative works include Huang Zi's "Tianlun Song", Chen Tianhe's "Memory", Washing Xinghai's "Midnight Song" and so on.

(4) Artistic songs with folk songs as the theme

In addition to ancient poetry art songs, lyric art songs and realistic art songs, art songs with folk songs are also an important part of Chinese art songs in the first half of the 20th century. Representative composer Mr Zhao Yuanren as early as the twenties from the coastal areas of the folk songs in some ethnic flavor rich songs and with multiple with majesty piano play, formed such a folk songs as the theme of art, representative works have "xiang hui wave", "flowers" flower "(i. e." jasmine ")," five more "," ten "cup", "female" meng "," old fisherman "," FengYang flower drum ", etc.

### **Huang Zi's art song**

Huang Zi (1904.3-1938.4) is a famous composer, music theorist, educator in China, born in Shaxian County, Jiangsu Province, Mr.Huang Zi's father is a very enlightened patriotic intellectual, mother is a woman of poetry and music with unique connotation, or the pioneer of the group of girls' school. Since Mr.Huang Zi was young, Mr.Huang Zi often listened to his mother's singing ballads in his arms. Influenced by his mother, he is also very fond of poetry, which is also such a good family atmosphere and good education. Mr.Huang Zi has shown his love and ability for music and poetry since childhood. Mr.Huang zi entered Beijing Tsinghua University in 1916. During the school, he actively participated in the orchestra and choir organized by the school (Yang, 2019). At the age of 17, he learned the piano from He Lin and learned a lot of Western music, which laid a solid foundation for his later professional music study. In 1924, only 20, Mr Huang to the university of Berlin specializing in psychology, and different liberal culture and ethos, more inspired Mr Huang the interest in music, not because of the professional and suppress his love of music, finally in 1926 after a degree to stay more system of music, in two years later to Yale university music, and made outstanding achievements during the period of school, won the high evaluation. With a bachelor's degree in music, Huang returned to China in 1929 and joined the National Music School. He took courses of composition, harmony, music history, music, and accessories. With such complicated work, Mr.Huang also devoted himself to music creation and social music activities. In 1937, Mr Huang resigned in the national sound, devoted to compiling "and acoustics" and "music" scientific research work, it's a pity that in 1938, Mr Huang left the unfinished "music" died due to illness, at the age of 34, like this has outstanding music creation achievements of musicians, is the development of Chinese music sigh regret and loss (Ma, 2006).

## Overview of Huang Zi's works

1. In his magnificent and short life, Mr. Huang zi has created or adapted 107 musical works of various genres, leaving a valuable musical wealth for future generations. In Huang Zi's music creation, it is mainly divided into two parts: vocal works and instrumental works, among which the largest proportion of vocal works is the creation of vocal works.

The first category, the art song. Art songs in Huang zi's music creation, is also the most classic representative works in the vocal music works, mainly can be divided into two categories according to the lyrics, one is from classical poetry, such as "flower", "fu lips", "floor", "emei song"; one is the lyrics, from modern and modern poetry, such as "homesickness", "rose", "spring song", these works general melody and poetry two are indispensable, closely combined, can perfect show the artistic conception contained in the music (Shan, 2020).

The second category, the mass songs. Mr. Huang zi's type of songs are mainly based on social themes, with simple musical style, short and concise structure, rich and sincere emotion. The representative works of this genre include "Tianlun Song", "Niu", "Nongjiale", "silkworm rearing" and so on.

The third category, children's songs. It is mainly created for children and campus classroom singing. The song melody line is smooth, the lyrics are catchy, easy to sing for children and classroom teaching and easy to understand. His representative works include The West Wind, Autumn Jiao Music, Autumn Near, Spring suburb, Snow Looking, Yan Rain, Lotus Picking, West Lake after the Rain and so on.

The fourth category, choral songs. Most of these kinds of songs have a relatively magnificent momentum, expressing the hot patriotic feelings and national feelings of the song creators and singers. His representative works include "Flag is fluttering", "the sky and the White Day are red", "National Day dedication", "Military song" and "Anti-enemy song", merged into "patriotic chorus song collection".

Fifth category, oratorio. Mr Huang's vocal music works in the last category is the oratri "long hate song", is also the first oratri, lyrics from the tang dynasty famous poet bai Juyi of the name, the song content tells the story of the tang minghuang and Yang that sad and moving love story, the western rigorous composition techniques flexible application to the national subject content, through the poetry content of tang minghuang pedantic irony, borrow political corruption in reality, with music struggle weapons to encourage the anti-japanese national salvation movement (Li, 2012).

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Huang Zi's Chinese art songs stand as a testament to his unique ability to blend Western compositional techniques with traditional Chinese musical elements, creating a body of work that is both innovative and culturally resonant. His compositions, characterized by their lyrical beauty, intricate melodies, and profound emotional depth, have not only enriched the Chinese art song repertoire but have also contributed significantly to the development of modern Chinese music. Huang Zi's dedication to preserving and enhancing Chinese musical heritage while embracing global influences highlights his role as a pivotal figure in the evolution of Chinese art music, ensuring its continued relevance and appreciation in contemporary times.

## References

- Chen, X. (2008). My views on the development of Chinese art songs. *People's Music*, 2008 (02).
- Li, J. (2012). *On the writing characteristics and singing style of Huang Zi art songs*. Southwest University.
- Liu, X. (2020). *A comparative study of musical styles between Schubert and Huang Zi art songs Take "Wild Rose" and "Flowers Fei" as an example*. Soochow University.
- Ma, X. (2006). The aesthetic value of Huang Zi's art song. *Art Exploration*, 2006 (S2), 136-137.
- Shan, Y. (2020). Singing Analysis of Huang Zi's art song "Homesickness". *Northern Music*, 2020.
- Wang, Y. (2017). The creative characteristics and aesthetic implication of Huang Zi's Art Songs. *Music creation*, 2017 (05), 96-98.
- Yang, Q. (2019). *Analysis of Huang Zi's art song "Spring Si Song"*. Jishou University.