

廣東音樂、說唱、大八音及古腔粵曲： 這些東西哪裡去了？



序言

四合院為中國傳統的建築，是由四面的建築物將庭院合圍在中間的合院式格局，故名四合院。是次「廣東四合院」節目集合了廣東音樂、說唱、大八音及古腔粵曲此四種廣東饒富特色及具保育意義的傳統民間表演藝術共冶一爐。在廣東民間表演藝術的長河中，它們都是有一定的歷史性及代表性。隨着時代的變遷、日新月異的玩意、光怪陸離的綽頭，令人目迷五色，這些瑰寶漸為大眾所忽視，甚至面臨失傳的邊緣。

廣東音樂現今只限於小規模、小組織，幾乎純粹為個人興趣；廣東說唱包括「木魚」、「龍舟」、「南音」、「板眼」，但除了「南音」在香港得到粵劇吸納，這四樣同體的說唱藝術在港、澳亦受一定程度的湮沒危機；

大八音現只餘小部分殘存於粵劇舞台，另有小部分存於殯儀儀式中；古腔粵曲雖然在粵劇舞台裡偶爾出現，但殘缺不堪。

四樣本來甚具規模的藝術，現在都變成殘缺不全，我們只能盡力將其收復，但能做到多少，就要看有多少有心人。因此，希望藉此次「廣東四合院」節目，喚醒有心人士對這四種民間表演藝術重新認識、再次重視、再三推動，讓廣東民間藝術的瑰寶得以傳承下去。

阮兆輝

一桌兩椅慈善基金藝術總監

The Four Indigenous Musical Arts of Guangdong : Where Have All These Genres Gone?



CHINESE OPERA FESTIVAL
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Foreword

Quadrangle is a traditional Chinese architectural design, with a courtyard in the middle enclosed by buildings on all four sides, hence the name. The programme this year 'Guangdong Quadrangle' is a showcase of four indigenous musical art forms of Guangdong, all filled with characteristics and worthy of preservation, namely Cantonese music, narrative singing, *dabayin* and Cantonese operatic song in classic singing style. In the long history of Guangdong folk performance art, they are of significant historical and representational value. With the change of times, people become dazzled by the rapidly-changing gadgets and bizarre gimmicks. These treasures are gradually overlooked by the mass or even at the brink of extinction.

Cantonese music nowadays is limited to small-scale performance by small groups which are almost purely for personal interest. Cantonese narrative singing consists of *muyu*, *longzhou*, *nanyin* and *banyan*. Other than *nanyin* which has been assimilated into Cantonese Opera, these four styles of narrative singing are facing the crisis of falling into oblivion in Hong Kong and Macao. *Dabayin* is nearly extinct leaving only a

remnant part in Cantonese Opera and in funeral ceremonies. Cantonese operatic song in classic singing style may appear in Cantonese Opera performance from time to time but is incomplete and fragmentary.

The four well-established musical art forms have now become incomplete and fragmentary. We can only try our best to preserve and restore them. The outcome depends on people's support. With this programme 'Guangdong Quadrangle', we hope to arouse people's awareness, refresh their knowledge and reignite their passion for these four indigenous musical art forms so as to let these treasures to pass on.

Yuen Siu-fai

Artistic Director of
One Table Two Chairs Charitable Foundation Ltd.

廣東音樂

廣東音樂，從廣義來說即是出現於廣東省內的音樂形式，如潮州弦詩樂、客家漢樂等；狹義則指流行於珠江三角洲一帶之器樂曲，此樂種亦被稱為粵樂。廣東音樂因著音色及樂器的之差異，可分為「硬弓」及「軟弓」。「硬弓」多用二弦、提琴、三弦、月琴、喉管及笛子，選用此等樂器因取其音色豪邁粗獷及明亮；「軟弓」則用高胡、二胡、椰胡、揚琴、秦琴、中阮及洞簫，這些樂器奏出來的音色較委婉、柔和，與「硬弓」形成強烈的對比。

廣東音樂不單與港人息息相關，亦扣連整個華人社區。從文獻資料所見，今日已知的廣東音樂自上世紀於省、港、澳、滬、佛山、台山活動蓬勃。事實上，廣東音樂不單緊守傳統，像呂文成、尹自重此等玩家亦非常時髦，西方樂器如梵玲(小提琴)、木琴、色士風及結他與中國樂器如高胡、揚琴、笛子等早已共治一爐，不同文化背景的樂器兼收並蓄，中西之別並非考慮之列，更重要是將音樂玩得好聽、「過癮」。今天，廣東音樂已被中國國務院列入第一批國家級非物質文化遺產，認識及聆聽廣東音樂，或能讓我們再反思本地文化的形成。



(由左至右)：樂人陳子晉、何耿明、余少華、杜泳與陳國輝合奏廣東音樂名曲《鳥投林》

說唱

木魚、龍舟、南音、板眼四種都屬於廣東說唱，這四種說唱其實是同出一門：徒歌無拍和、不上板的是「木魚」；加上一鑼一鼓、似有節奏而沒有拍子的是「龍舟」；上了板、一板三叮、加上一箏一板拍和的是「南音」；將南音濃縮成一板一叮的是「板眼」。四種說唱雖然唱法不同，但結構、造句及平仄均是一樣。是何人、何地、何時形成今時說唱藝術的面貌？

木魚

明末清初文學家屈翁山在《廣東新語》一書裡指出，「木魚」源自江蘇省一帶漁民所唱的「摸漁歌」，因方言有異，而由「摸漁」說成「木魚」。廣東人敲經唸佛所敲、以木材掏空並刻以魚為圖案的叫木魚，但實際在唱「木魚」時，卻不需要敲木魚的。

龍舟

「龍舟」原為流浪藝人謀生的土調歌謠，手持用木棒豎起的木製龍舟伴唱吉祥致語，令人聯想龍舟競渡，故有此命名。

南音

「南音」所用的拍和樂器是屬江南絲竹的檀板和箏，在福建也有同名的曲藝，但福建南音是南戲、南曲、南詞體系，是曲牌體的，而廣東南音是板腔體的。廣東南音於上世紀初曾紅遍香江，不少纨绔子弟流連煙花之地聆聽南音，大戶人家則聘請瞽師、師娘(失明男、女藝人)登門獻藝。至五十年代以後，電台廣播普及，南音亦是極受歡迎的節目之一。南音文詞短小精煉，多唱述士人與妓女之情，雖然有批評指南音曲詞俚俗，尤其對女性不恭、難登大雅之堂，但事實是喜愛南音者眾，蔚成當年之流行音樂。隨著西歐及粵語流行曲的興起，六十年代末電台正式取消南音節目，南音逐漸消失於本土主流文化。今天，若要將南音重置於流行文化或許是天方夜談，但認識此本土樂曲卻有助了解舊日港人藝術品味、兩性價值及本土文化脈絡。要數香港地水南音唱家，當為瞽師杜煥。杜煥幼時失明，隨孫生學唱南音，十六歲自澳門赴港，在煙館、妓院賣唱，惟先後染上鴉片毒癮、妻兒相繼離世。杜煥晚年曾於電台演唱約十五載，後突然被電台辭退，離世前只能在街頭賣唱，一生際遇坎坷。學者榮鴻曾教授於1975年曾錄下杜煥的南音、板眼、龍舟等說唱曲藝，使一代瞽師的聲音得以傳世。

板眼

「板眼」不採用廣東重拍為板、輕拍為叮的叫法，而跟隨外省將叮稱為「眼」的叫法，故「一板一叮」便稱為「板眼」。



龍舟



瞽師杜煥錄製南音、板眼、龍舟等說唱曲藝

說唱藝術體系自江蘇、沿浙江、福建而臨到廣東之可信性甚高。阮兆輝教授於上世紀八十年代初，因公幹常到上海，曾託文化部的朋友代查，結果是真有其事，但當時已經沒有人會唱「摸漁歌」，於當地也失傳了。當時只是片面的調查，不夠深入，故阮教授有意繼續深入查證。這四種說唱藝術在廣東省已式微，而在香港，除了粵劇演出吸納了說唱藝術之外，尚有個別藝人及愛好者偶有演唱，唯多以南音為主。為免重蹈於起源地湮沒的覆轍，必須好好保留及繼承這些珍貴的說唱藝術。

大八音

八音班約於清末民初盛行於珠江三角洲一帶，其演奏可分坐樂與行樂，多用於官府的公務活動，及民間神誕、齋醮、紅、白二事等，主奏樂器為噴吶(廣府地區稱為「吶吶」)及各種敲擊樂器，如高邊鑼、小鈸、扁鼓等。清朝咸豐四年(1854年)，粵劇藝人李文茂率兵抗清被剿，粵劇被禁演十年，當時八音班用大、小噴吶模彷平、子喉唱腔，以「奏」粵劇來代替粵劇演出，頗受民眾歡迎。1935年，香港政府為慶祝英皇銀禧大典，邀來八隊八音班、共二百餘人參與巡遊，為八音班最興盛之期。新中國成立後，八音班因被視為封建之物，遭到禁演，樂手流落民間後，八音班漸漸式微。

廣東吹打樂

除了廣府地區的八音班外，廣東一帶的吹打樂還包括海陸豐吹打樂、湛江吹打樂、粵北吹打樂、漢樂中軍班、潮州大鑼鼓等。每個樂種雖然各有特色，但亦吸收本土化互相扣連。以廣府八音班為例，其演奏曲目多為崑腔及高腔牌子；海陸豐吹打樂則見到崑腔、弋陽腔、亂彈的影子，與廣府八音班演奏的牌子源流非常接近。另外，各地演奏的牌子名稱亦有不少是相同的，如【雁兒落】、【泣顏回】便分別出現於廣府八音班、漢樂中軍班、海陸豐吹打樂及潮州大鑼鼓等，推斷各吹打樂種源自同一祖宗，惟每一個地方因應其歷史、語言及文化等因素，而形成各自的風格。著名粵劇頭架師傅高潤鴻指出，南、北吹打之分別是，前者較雄壯及「硬橋硬馬」，此情況與南拳北腿或南獅北獅相似。聆聽各種廣東吹打樂，有助我們了解本土文化之形成。

要說與港人息息相關的吹打樂，不能不提每天於各殯儀館所奏的道教正一派殯儀音樂。其實於昔日的香港，紅、白二事皆由八音班主理，電影《阿超結婚》(1958年)第一幕便看到八音班遊街演出之情景。兩者所奏之曲目甚至相通，如《一錠金》、《小開門》等，於婚嫁及祭祀儀式上均會演奏，民間樂手會靈活調整其演奏方法去配合不同場景及氣氛。可惜，吹打樂之重要性在香港已大不如前，婚宴中現在只會聽到西洋弦樂四重奏或流行曲等，吹打樂僅能在人生最後一程中登場。

鑼鼓櫃

大八音於上世紀二十至五十年代大行其道，每次慶典出會、神誕、打醮等活動，都會見到「鑼鼓櫃」(櫃：行內人讀為「鬼」)。今日已難見這種情況，只於坪洲、元朗等鄉村仍有出會，但現今之鑼鼓櫃已簡化至用鐵框包着大鼓。唯一一個留傳下來的鑼鼓櫃保存在澳洲本迪戈(Bendigo)(近墨爾本的一個城市)的金龍博物館內。今次展覽的鑼鼓櫃便是根據這件古董展品仿製而成。



現保存於澳洲本迪戈金龍博物館的鑼鼓櫃



澳洲本迪戈復活節遊行(1927年)



古腔粵曲

廣東位處偏南的地方，本身沒有戲曲，所有的戲曲都源於外省，唱的自然不是廣東話。尋根問源，就要從古腔粵曲着手。

古腔、今腔

如何去定義「古腔」和「今腔」？百年前「古腔」二字未必存在，相信是民國初期我們的先輩倡議廣東戲應用廣府話演唱，經過金山炳、白駒榮、太子卓、朱次伯等多位先賢慢慢改變，粵曲才發展成今天的面貌。雖然改了用「白話」演唱，但以前的古老戲、古老腔有其保留的價值，因此仍未完全消失。

「古腔」異於「今腔」最明顯的分別是，「古腔」以「官話」演唱，「官話」即「中州韻」，或稱「中原音韻」，亦有說法「官話」是從廣西桂林而來，稱為「桂林官話」。「官話」的定義是「做官說的語言」或「與官交談說的語言」，因為以前為減少貪污舞弊，大多數的官員都會被外調，避免於鄉黨內有人事關係，所以廣東的官員大多是外省人，與官員談話便不能用廣府話溝通，故有「官話」之稱。至於來自廣西桂林一說，有指祖師爺是湖北人張五先師，走紅後上京演出，唯他於北京鼓吹反清而被通緝，繼而逃亡南下至廣東佛山大基尾。

梆子腔、二黃腔

戲曲的板腔體有兩個大體系，一個是梆子系，一個是二黃系，即梆子腔及二黃腔，古腔粵曲亦由這兩個體系組成，通常是一個調式到尾：一首曲是梆子腔，就由梆子的首板到煞板；若是二黃腔，亦是由首板一直到煞板。熟習了古腔粵曲，便會對梆子、二黃兩個體系更加熟悉。

梆子腔、二黃腔基本上只是一句「上句」，一句「下句」。仄聲結束的為「上句」，平聲結束的為「下句」，演奏起來雖會予觀眾沉悶的感覺，但更能突顯角色人物的特色、演員的表演、及演員對角色人物的拿捏。例如同是一句中板，由同是武將的呂布、周瑜及趙雲演唱，演繹方式各有不同；賈寶王與張君瑞同是小生，曲式雖然一樣，但人物不同，唱法、腔口也不一樣。研究與追尋不同的演唱方式與風格，亦同時在欣賞戲曲藝術的根源。

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Cantonese Music

In its broad sense, Cantonese music refers to the music form that appear in Guangdong province such as Chaozhou silk-string music and Hakka music while in its narrow sense, it refers to the instrumental music that flourishes around the region of Pearl River Delta. This music genre is also known as *yueyue*. Based on the difference in tone and instrument, it can be divided into 'taut bow' and 'slack bow'. Taut bow ensembles feature high and bright tones, and tend to use instruments such as two-stringed fiddles (*erxian* and *tiqin*), plucked lutes (*sanxian* and *yueqin*), and bamboo flutes (*dizi*). Contrasting sharply against taut bow, slack bow ensembles have gentle and delicate tones, and are led by two-stringed fiddles (*gaohu*, *erhu* and *yehu*), hammered dulcimers (*yangqin*), plucked lutes (*qinqin* and *zhongruan*) and end-blown flutes (*xiao*).

Cantonese music is not only closely related to Hong Kong people, it is also connected to the entire Chinese community. Reference materials reflect that since the last century, Cantonese music has been prosperous in Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Macao, Shanghai, Foshan and Taishan regions. As a matter of fact, Cantonese music not only adheres to tradition, musicians like Lui Man-shing and Wan Chi-chung are very sophisticated. Western instruments such as violin, xylophone, saxophone and guitar have been combined with the playing of Chinese instruments like *gaohu*, *yangqin* and *dizi*. Music instruments of diverse cultural backgrounds are incorporated. Diversity of the East and West matters no more, what matters is the music must be well-played and fun to listen to. Today, Cantonese music has been listed by the China State Council in the first batch of National Intangible Cultural Heritage. Learning and listening to Cantonese music can allow us to reflect upon the formation of local culture.



(From left to right): The local veteran musicians of Cantonese music, Chan Chi-chun, Ho Kang-ming, Yu Siu-wah, To Wing and Chan Kwok-fai playing the classic piece *Birds Returning to the Woods*

Narrative Singing

The four types of Guangdong narrative singing: *muyu*, *longzhou*, *nanyin* and *banyan* actually belong to the same school. Unaccompanied singing with no clapper beat is *muyu*; it becomes *longzhou* when sung to the accompaniment of gong and drum, providing rhythm but no beat; becomes *nanyin* when sung with a clapper beat to the accompaniment of the *zheng*, and becomes *banyan* when sung with a faster beat. The singing style of each may differ, yet the structure, line composition and tones are all the same. When and where, and by whom did narrative singing art evolve into the format of today?

Muyu

According to Qu Wengshans's *New Essays of Guangdong* wrote during the late Ming and early Qing period, *muyu* originates from the *moyuge* of fishermen in the region of Jiangsu province. Due to the difference in dialect, *moyu* gradually becomes *muyu*. *Muyu* refers to the wooden block carved with fish pattern used by Guangdong people in Buddhist chanting. However, there is no need to beat the wooden fish block when singing *muyu*.

Longzhou

Longzhou were originally folk tunes sung by wandering entertainers as a way to make a living. The entertainers held wooden dragon boats erected on wooden poles as they sang.

Nanyin

The *tanban* (sandalwood clapper) and *zheng* used for accompanying *nanyin* belong to the Jiangnan instrumental music. There is a musical art form with the same name in Fujian, but Fujian *nanyin* belongs to the *nanxi*, *nanqu* and *nanci* systems, and is considered part of the set tune music family, while local *nanyin* belongs to the vocal system of *banqiang*. *Nanyin* has been very popular in Hong Kong during the beginning of last century, favoured by rich men hanging out in red-light districts. Rich families would also employ blind musicians and female artistes to perform at their homes. Since the 50s, radio broadcast began to gain popularity and *nanyin* has been one of the most popular programmes. Its lyrics are short and concise depicting mostly love affairs between scholars and prostitutes. Despite the criticism for its unrefined lyrics and disrespect for women, *nanyin* has commanded a great following and become the pop music of the time. With the rise of Western and Cantonese pop music in the late 60s, *nanyin* radio programme was officially cancelled. *Nanyin* gradually disappears from the mainstream local culture. Today, it may sound impossible or impractical to reinstate *nanyin* into local pop culture, yet the understanding of this singing art help people to appreciate the artistic taste of local people in the old times, relationship between the sexes and the local cultural context. When we think of *nanyin* singers in Hong Kong, blind musician Dou Wun comes to mind. Dou was blind from childhood and followed the blind musician Suen to learn *nanyin*. He came to Hong Kong from Macao at the age of sixteen and started singing at opium dens and brothels. He got addicted to opium later on while his wife and son died one after the other. In his twilight years, Dou has sung in the radio station for about 15 years before being dismissed suddenly. He spent his remaining years singing in the street. His life is full of trials and tribulations. Professor Bell Yung has made a recording for Dou Wun on his *nanyin*, *banyan* and *longzhou* singing to let the voice of this remarkable blind musician be heard all over the world.

Banyan

Instead of naming the strong beat as *ban* and the light beat as *ding* as is commonly practised in Guangdong, musicians follow the other provinces and name the light beat as *yan*. One strong and one light beat thus becomes *banyan*.



Longzhou (Dragon Boat)



Blind musician Dou Wun recording *nanyin*, *banyan* and *longzhou* singing

It is highly credible that the system of narrative singing art today comes to Guangdong from Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Fujia. Professor Yuen Siu-fai travelled to Shanghai frequently for business during the early 80s and has asked friends in the Ministry of Culture to investigate on this matter. The outcome is affirmative. Yet *moyuge* which has gone in decline was no longer heard at that time. Since the investigation at that time was not thorough enough, Yuen has decided to continue to investigate. These four types of narrative singing have been in decline in Guangdong. The art has been assimilated into Cantonese Opera performances in Hong Kong and is still performed by certain artists and enthusiasts, though mainly for *nanyin*. In order not to repeat the same mistake of letting the origin perish, we have to preserve, promote and inherit well this narrative singing art which is filled with folk performance characteristics and has been popular in Guangdong for hundreds of years.

Dabayin

Bayin ensembles flourished around the regions of Pearl River Delta towards the late Qing period and early Republic. Performances can be divided into seated performances and processions, which were usually held during official government activities, birthday celebrations for folk deities, Taoist rites for fasts and offerings, weddings, and funerals. The core musical instruments are the *suona* (*dida* in Cantonese) and various percussion instruments such as the *gaobianluo*, *xiaobo* and *biangu*. In the 4th year of the Xianfeng era in Qing dynasty (1854), Cantonese Opera artiste Lee Man-mau was suppressed for revolting against the Qing court. Cantonese Opera performance was hence banned for ten years. The *bayin* ensembles at that time used big and small *suonas* to simulate the voices of the male and female roles to play the opera in its entirety. It became quite popular. In 1935, the Hong Kong Government invited eight *bayin* ensembles to celebrate King George V's Silver Jubilee. More than 200 people took part in the parade, a testament to the popularity of these ensembles. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, *bayin* has been regarded as feudalistic and performances were banned. Musicians wandered off and the ensembles gradually went into decline.

Guangdong Wind and Percussion Music

Apart from the *bayin* ensembles in Guangzhou region, Guangdong wind and percussion music also refers to the Shanwei, Zhanjiang, Northern Guangdong, Hakka and Chaozhou music. Each genre has its unique features while also assimilates from the others. For instance, repertoires played by Guangzhou *bayin* ensembles are mostly *kunqiang* and *gaoqiang* set tunes. On the other hand, influence of *kunqiang*, *yiyangqiang* and *luantan* can be seen in the Shanwei music, which is reminiscent of the tune origin of the *bayin* ensembles. Besides, quite a number of tunes played in these regions have the same titles, for example *Wild Geese Landing* and *Qi-Yan-Hui*. They appear not only in Guangzhou *bayin* ensembles but also in Hakka, Shanwei and Chaozhou music troupes as well. It is estimated that the music of these regions came from the same origin but each developed its unique style due to different language, historical and cultural reasons. Renowned Cantonese Opera musician Ko Yun-hung has pointed out the difference between the southern and northern wind and percussion music is that the former is more powerful and hard, somewhat like the difference between southern and northern kung-fu or lion dance. Exposure to different types of wind and percussion music helps us to understand the formation of local culture.

Speaking of the wind and percussion music closely tied to the lives of Hong Kong people, one cannot fail to mention the funeral music of the Taoist Orthodox Unity Sect played in all funeral parlours every day. In fact, music at weddings and funerals were usually handled by *bayin* ensembles in the olden days. The first scene in the Hong Kong movie *Ah Chiu Getting Married* (1958) shows a *bayin* ensemble parading the streets. The repertoires used for both occasions can be used interchangeably, for example *An Ingot of Gold* and *Xiao-Kai-Men* can be used for both weddings and religious rituals. The folk musicians would simply adjust their style of playing to adapt to the occasions and the mood. However, wind and percussion music has become much less important in Hong Kong nowadays. Instead, western string quartet or popular music is usually played during weddings while wind and percussion music is only played to accompany one before being lain into grave.

Luogugui (Gong and Drum Cabinet)

Dabayin was very popular in the last century from the 20s to the 50s. During activities like festival processions, birthday celebrations for deities and Taoist rites of offerings, *luogugui* (gong and drum cabinet) (*gui*: insiders pronounce as *gwai*, meaning ghost) would certainly be seen. Today, this kind of situation can hardly be seen except in festival parades in Peng Chau and villages in Yuen Long. The cabinet used nowadays has been simplified to a big drum wrapped in steel frames. The one and only gong and drum cabinet passed down is kept in the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo, a city near Melbourne in Australia. The cabinet shown in this exhibition is a replica of the antique.



Luogugui kept in the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo



Festival procession in Bendigo (1927)



Cantonese Operatic Song in Classic Singing Style

Guangdong, located more to the south of China, did not have its own style of traditional theatrical forms. The ones that were performed on stage came from other provinces and were not sung in Cantonese. To trace the origin, we have to start with Cantonese operatic songs in classic singing style.

Classic Style, Contemporary Style

How to define 'classic' and 'contemporary' singing style? The term 'Classic singing style' may not have existed a hundred years ago. It is probably our predecessors in the early Republic that proposed Cantonese Opera should be sung in Cantonese. Through the modification and refinement by various predecessors like Kam Shan-bing, Pak Kui-wing, Tai Chi-cheuk and Chu Chi-pak, Cantonese operatic singing has evolved into the format of today. Despite it is sung in Cantonese, the ancient repertoires and classic singing styles are still valuable and have not yet disappeared entirely.

The distinct difference between 'classic' and 'contemporary' singing style is that 'classic' singing style was performed in *guanhua* or *Zhongzhouyun*, also known as *Zhongyuan yinyun*. There is also a saying that *guanhua* came from Guangxi Guilin, known as 'Guilin *guanhua*'. *Guanhua* refers to the dialect spoken by officials or the dialect used to converse with officials. At that time, most officials would be transferred elsewhere to minimise corruption and avoid the possibility of nepotism. Most officials in Guangdong thus came from other provinces. As it was not possible to use Cantonese to converse with them, *guanhua* was used as a result. The other saying on Guangxi Guilin pointed out that the founder was maestro Zhang Wu from Hubei. He went to Beijing to perform after gaining popularity but was wanted by the government for anti-Qing propaganda, fled south to Foshan Dajiwei in Guangdong.

Bangziqiang, Erhuangqiang

The *banqiang* musical structure of Chinese opera is divided into two major systems: *bangzi* (or *bangziqiang*) and *erhuang* (or *erhuangqiang*). Together, these two systems form the classic singing styles. The same musical mode tends to be used for its beat forms, from *shouban* to *shaban*, no matter it is in *bangziqiang* or *erhuangqiang*. Acquaintance with Cantonese operatic singing in classic singing style means acquaintance with the systems of *bangzi* and *erhuang*.

There is a consistency to the *bangzi* and *erhuang* singing styles, which are basically made up of a couplet, with a first line (the last word rhyming with tilting tones) and a second line (the last word rhyming with level tones). The performance may appear boring to the audience but actors can give their own spin to the classic singing style using different vocal techniques and approaches to highlight the character's personality. For instance a line of the same beat sung by military characters Lu Bu, Zhou Yu and Zhao Yun may sound very different. Likewise for *xiaosheng* (young male) roles such as Jia Baoyu and Zhang Junrui, the same tune pattern can be sung and interpreted differently. To study and search for different ways and styles of singing while in the meantime appreciate the origin of the art of operatic singing.

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