

# Teaching Guangdong Music in the Art Troupes, China

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## Abstracts

Guangdong's songs are an important part of Guangdong culture, carrying the simple memory of Guangdong people to traditional songs with solid local characteristics and historical and cultural heritage value. In the current music major in all music textbooks, the figure of Guangdong's song is rare. Because of this, it is necessary to bring Guangdong's songs into the teaching of the art troupe. Integrating Guangdong's songs into the teaching activities of music majors of art troupes can not only enrich the program forms of Guangdong art troupes but also promote the inheritance and development of Guangdong's songs, to inherit excellent traditional Chinese culture.

**Keywords:** Teaching Guangdong Music; The Art Troupes; China

## Introduction

As a musical culture in the Lingnan region, Guangdong folk songs have a strong regional color. They are the educational content and way to inherit Guangfu culture and cultivate college students in Guangdong with positive Guangfu cultural and psychological qualities. Guangdong folk songs are deeply loved by the people, especially the locals, because of their unique and popular art forms. Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate Guangdong folk songs into the teaching of music majors as the content of music majors. Starting Guangdong college students to learn folk songs can not only cultivate Guangdong college students' national cultural confidence and inherit and develop regional culture but also seize the critical period of Guangdong college students' professional learning and promote the development of Guangdong college students' professional ability. In order to carry out folk song education for Guangdong college students majoring in music, it is necessary for students majoring in music majors to have the literacy of Guangdong folk song education and how to carry out effective folk song teaching in the classroom of a music major, choosing a reasonable teaching method is very important. However, unfortunately, in all the current music major music textbooks, Guangdong folk songs are rare. Because of this, the need to incorporate Guangdong folk songs into the teaching of music majors is even more highlighted.

Guangdong music is a piece of title music structured in simplicity and complexity. It uses the rich music and wide vocal range of instrumental music, as well as the richness and variety of expression techniques, to write scenery, lyricism, and shapes, so the local color is rich and has a special artistic charm. Guangdong music is good at depicting small situations and pays attention to the traditional taste of life. To appreciate it, finding major social life themes is optional, but the description of natural scenes often gives people a feeling of entertainment. Mr. Yu Qiwei used "secular feelings, civilian consciousness" to summarize the character or aesthetic characteristics of Guangdong music, that is, what Guangdong music describes and expresses, mostly the feelings of ordinary people, is in our secular life,

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<sup>3</sup> Received: December 6, 2022; Revised: December 13, 2023; Accepted: December 14, 2022

relatively speaking, it does not pursue the kind of metaphorical and profound philosophical preaching like Central Plains music or some religious music, and the feeling of facing desolate history in the style of a scholar, it shows a lot of the real life of Guangdong people, jokingly saying that it is "carrying birdcages, sighing refreshments", "The definition of "Guangdong music" in the "Dictionary of Chinese Folk Art" says that Guangdong music is derived from Guangdong opera's cutscene scores, ditties, etc., but there is another point of view, "Guangdong music" is not something completely home-grown, but the product of the combination of provincial music taking root in the local area and local customs, language, and art, because many provincial opera arts have entered Guangdong, including Kunqu opera, Yiyang cavity, Bangzi, Gao cavity, Hui opera, Han opera, random bomb, Qiyang opera, etc. It provides nutrition and creates conditions for Guangdong to form local Guangdong opera, opera art, and Guangdong music. These two views are consistent but reflect the inheritance and evolution of Guangdong music. According to the general inheritance law of folk art, the formation of a pure instrumental music genre is generally produced with singing or dancing, and then the music is played independently. From the historical information and reality we have at present, "Guangdong music" is inextricably linked with Guangdong opera and Guangdong opera regardless of musical instruments, musical instrument combinations, bands, and repertoire, and the relationship between the two is difficult to distinguish. In the process of continuous development, "Guangdong music" gradually became independent from opera music after being used as accompaniment music to purely instrumental music, and finally formed "Guangdong music" in the form of folk instrumental ensembles, which is in line with the development law of national musical instruments throughout the country. Therefore, from the perspective of the rheological process of "Guangdong music," the first view has its correct side. However, if you go back to the origin of "Guangdong music," this statement is not deep enough.

## **Characteristics of Guangdong's Songs**

### **Melody characteristics of Guangdong songs**

The melodies of Guangdong songs are divided into two categories: traditional melodies and Cantopop music. Guangdong traditional music is a traditional silk and bamboo music popular in the Pearl River Delta and Guangdong dialect areas centered in Guangzhou. It is listed as one of the "Three Artistic Treasures of Lingnan," along with Guangdong Opera and the Lingnan School. The people love it for its light, soft, gorgeous, fine, and thick characteristics, and fresh and smooth, melodious, and beautiful Lingnan style. Its influence has spread throughout the country and is popular in Chinese communities worldwide. Originally, it was called "cutscene," "score," and "ditty" by locals because of its many performances of opera cutscenes and folk instrumental ditties. Later, it gradually formed its unique melody, key, and playing style characteristics in performance. As a distinctive independent local music, it was called "Guangdong music" by people from other provinces. Its popular area is centered on Guangzhou and the Pearl River Delta. Zhanjiang was also popular, then gradually spread to Shanghai and the northern cities of Tianjin, Beijing, and other major cities, and also played in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia.

The title of "Guangdong music" is still controversial. According to the current administrative division, the concept of Guangdong music should include Hakka music, Teochew music, Yao and She music in Guangdong Province, and even Hainan's Qiong music, which has been separated from Guangdong. However, the art form is difficult to divide by

administrative region, and its existence and development have their objective historical process due to the limited spread of Hakka music, Teochew music, and Qiongyue. The influence is not large, and the understanding of Guangdong music by people in other provinces is often limited to the music of the Guangdong folk system, so "Guangdong music" in the usual sense should refer to Guangdong music in a narrow sense. Some scholars believe this name includes Chaole, Hanle, and Qiongle, which easily causes confusion and misunderstanding. Some experts advocate changing it to "Guangdong music." In contrast, others believe that the title "Guangdong music" has become a common name for this music in all of China or places with Chinese people worldwide and can be used without changing.

The orchestra of Guangdong music in the early days used the same instruments as opera music, consisting of five pieces: *erxian*, violin (the same as *Banhu*, but larger), three-string, *yueqin*, and horizontal flute, known as "five heads," also known as "hard bow combination." In 1926, Guangdong musicians and composers absorbed the *erhu* (changing the outer string to a steel string and playing it between the legs, known as *Yue Hu*) from Shanghai silk bamboo music, absorbing the *qin* from Chaozhou music, plus the original popular *yangqin*, its arrangement changed from the original "five heads" to the "three heads" of *Yuehu*, *Qin*, and *yangqin*. Later, based on the "three-piece head," the *Dongxiao* and coconut beard were added to become the "five-piece head." Compared to earlier forms of playing, "three-piece heads" and "five-piece heads" are also called "soft bow combinations." In the 30s, due to the influence of Western music culture, violin, saxophone, guitar, trumpet, xylophone, and other exotic instruments were widely used in the city's Guangdong music performance. The consequences of this large absorption of foreign musical instruments can be said to be twofold: on the one hand, it destroys the traditional performance style of Guangdong music, making it dance-oriented and jazzy; On the other hand, due to the efforts of performers and the influence of folk music, many foreign musical instruments have made bold explorations and beneficial attempts in nationalization and localization. Especially the transformation of violin performance in the 30s. Yin Zizheng's violin performance of "Little Peach" and other music created the Guangdong violin playing style. He applied various violin techniques to make the music more expressive, and this reform was loved, accepted, and recognized by the masses (Tang, 2021 : 12).

Guangdong pop songs generally refer to popular songs sung in Guangdong (Guangdong) in Hong Kong because the original composer in Hong Kong is Guangdong, also known as Guangdong songs. It refers to modern "Guangdong pop music" generally speaking, Guangdong pop songs are derived from traditional Guangdong opera, in addition to the original Guangdong scores and a large number of quotations from other provinces' folk songs filled in Guangdong lyrics. Later, due to the special status of Hong Kong during the Anti-Japanese War, a large number of mainland musicians came to Hong Kong for refuge. This cultural and musical exchange injected new vitality into Hong Kong pop songs and Hong Kong popular songs at this time, including many elements, including old Shanghai pop music and European and American pop music.

Guangdong pop songs are popular music developed from regional dramas. In the past two decades of the last century, it has not only led the Chinese pop music scene but also influenced the global pop music scene, and we can see the musical value of Cantopop songs themselves. However, the fate of eventual decline also shows the need to follow the trends of modern pop music to find the right direction. With the continuous development of China's economic reform and opening up, the types of popular songs are more diverse, the audience is

more extensive, and the influence on the contemporary music scene is getting bigger and bigger. First, Cantopop songs must maintain their living space and insist on carrying forward their own characteristics. Nowadays, due to the development and convenience of the Internet, people can access popular music from all over the world, and the "regional characteristics" are an important element in attracting musicians and fans. The culture of each place contains the wisdom of the local people, and through the precipitation of history, it is full of unique life or characteristic culture, which attracts fans from all over the world. The national characteristic of Guangdong songs lies in its language, which is different from Chinese it has more tones, local vocabulary, and its unique flavor in language rhythm (Gao, 2022 : 9).

Lyrics are a major feature of Guangdong songs. In terms of the emotional color described by the lyrics, the choice of themes in Guangdong songs today is very rich. In addition to the theme of love, it also includes inspiration, martial arts, praise of nature, philosophy, life, satirical society, realism, family and country feelings, Hong Kong feelings, anti-war, hope for peace, and other materials. However, the lyrics serve the song itself. If the lyrics are too vernacular, the melody will be disconnected from the lyrics, making the song itself flawed, let alone realize its music appreciation value. Therefore, the composer of Guangdong songs will compose music according to the special vocal rhythm of Guangdong and the different language structures of Chinese to make the song more pleasant and catchy. Today's Guangdong song melodies are more diverse and varied than the rich regional characteristics of the golden period of that year. In addition to incorporating regional characteristics, they will add rock, jazz, blues, and other popular elements (Li & He, 2016 : 5).

## **Creation of the Songs in Guangdong**

### **Guangdong song lyric creation**

Many people in China like Guangdong songs very much. Whether they sing or listen to them, they feel they are a pleasure. Moreover, there are indeed many good Guangdong songs. However, if you want to write Guangdong lyrics, then the problem is much more complicated. Because Guangdong is completely different from the Mandarin we are most familiar with daily, it will be more difficult to create. So what are the skills of Guangdong lyric writing, and what skills do we have to help better write Guangdong lyrics?

1) One of the skills of Guangdong lyric writing is first understanding Guangdong. If you need help understanding Guangdong or even speaking or listening to it, it is very difficult for you to create or even not understand the essentials. Therefore, you should have a general understanding of Guangdong before creating Guangdong lyrics. Even the clumsiest way you can do this is to write the lyrics you created in Mandarin Chinese and then find friends familiar with Guangdong to help you with Guangdong translation.

2) The second skill of Guangdong lyric writing is to be refined in some Guangdong words. The so-called refined means that Guangdong vocabulary is sometimes very different from Chinese vocabulary, so when writing Guangdong lyrics. Some professional Guangdong nouns must be expressed with proper nouns so that the written Guangdong lyrics will have more Guangdong flavor.

3) In the process of Guangdong lyrics creation, you can also find professional Guangdong lyrics creation software to correct errors. Some professional Guangdong lyric writing software can help you correct errors in words, such as your text expression errors. The software can find out the errors and help you correct them.

### **Guangdong song melody creation**

Guangdong song melody creation and traditional music have many commonalities in some aspects. However, they have a unique personality, which is based on tradition and transcends tradition, and is a unique music theory system. The rhythm of modern Guangdong songs is far more complex than traditional music, and the needs for harmony progression and harmony color are also significantly different from traditional music. The author believes that the purpose of learning techniques is to abandon them. All artistic creation requires learning techniques first, learning simple melodic techniques and mastering them to play in songwriting and form your style freely.

#### **1) How to save music material**

Saving music material is a writing skill that every creator must master because the more concise the material, the more concentrated the musical image, the more concentrated the musical image, the stronger the memory. If you use music material sparingly, the work will appear organized. The principle of saving material is to keep common elements as much as possible. Use repetition, imitation, and interval modulation as much as possible in the melody; When necessary, fresh melodic material appears, so the contrast will appear stronger.

#### **2) How to establish a musical style**

The musical style is the life of Guangdong songs and establishing the musical style of work is equivalent to shaping the soul of the work. But with so much music, how do you grasp their gist? First, you must listen more to understand the various styles from an emotional point of view. If you listen to more music, the accumulation of quantity will inevitably rise to the embodiment of the senses, and over time, the melody will be in everyone's heart. In the process of creation, from time to time, the shadow of listening to music will be revealed. Secondly, to understand various styles rationally, we must analyze more, such as their melodies, rhythms, genres, and other characteristics. After mastering the characteristics of a style, you must also learn to apply it. For example, to create a jazz-style song, first of all, you can consider whether the rhythm can use a "swing" rhythm; secondly, whether you can consider adding a blues scale (3 or 7 down) to the melody to reflect its color.

#### **3) How to use liners**

Lining refers to imaginary words with no real meaning, such as oh, ah, woo, and la. In the composition, using liners, when necessary, will make the song more perfect. When the melody is halfway through, and no methods and techniques are easy to use, you can use liners. When there is a long-time value in the score, the liner can be used to fill the gap too long. When the melody of some songs develops to the end of the song, the mood needs to be completed more and needs to continue. At this time, you can use liners to supplement the mood. In short, not all linings can be used everywhere, and the use of linings should be purposeful.

#### **4) How to grasp the vocal range of a song**

In traditional vocal songs, the singer has been trained for a long time to master the combination of vocal skills and vocal cords and can sing sounds higher than the natural voice. Guangdong songs are sung in a natural voice, so the human vocal range limits their vocal range. Guangdong songs are mainly divided into boys' works and girls' works. In actual creation, it is necessary to adjust the vocal range in combination with the singer's vocal range and timbre characteristics. In today's Guangdong songs, the vocal range is within two octaves, and the optimal range should be controlled between 9~13 degrees. Secondly, it is necessary to understand the true and false voice change points of girls and the true sound limit of boys. Creators should consider it according to the actual situation.

### 5) How to form memory points for music

The essential feature of Guangdong songs is that they are easy to remember and sing, which is also the essence of Guangdong songs. Therefore, a good song must have a musical memory point. In layman's terms, there must be one or more melodies that people can remember. How to do this?

First, choose the lyrics: these are the most basic and important. The lyrics should have a sense of meaning and be able to express feelings in concise language. Poetry is also concise and profound, but lyrics are different from poetry. The lyrics of Guangdong songs should be 1:3 language, not choose words that are difficult to pronounce, and the formal structure should be complex and neat. Simple, clear, and straightforward.

Second, repetition is undoubtedly the best way to form a memory. As mentioned above, repetition can deepen the impression of the viewer. For example, the repeated repetition of the phrase 《大大世界小小爱》 in the chorus of "大大世界小小爱" makes it a memory point for the song. In fact, everyone remembers this sentence the most.

Third, in addition to repetition, we should pay attention to the fluency of the melody and take colloquialism as the principle. The melody is simple, and it is only by following it that it can make it catchy. Refrain from complicating the melody in pursuit of technology. Complicate the interval relationship between the melodic tones. This will make it difficult for the listener to sing the correct melody and form memory points (Huang, 2021 : 53).

## Teaching Guangdong music

### **Continuously improve the level of teaching and improve the comprehensive musical quality of teachers "**

The most critical and necessary thing is improving the overall quality of music teachers in our country." Therefore, as music educators, we must learn continuous and long-term learning of music-related knowledge and culture, enrich the teaching experience, improve teaching level, and improve our comprehensive quality, which is the key to doing a good job in music teaching. First, the teaching of nursery rhymes requires accurate pronunciation of Guangdong. For teachers, especially teachers from all over the world, it is challenging and requires time and serious study; Second, actively do a good job in preparing nursery rhyme materials. Since there is currently no published music series of teaching materials, including folk songs in the professional direction of Guangdong songs, it is still necessary for teachers to do a good job in developing local music teaching materials, such as collecting audio, graphic and text materials, such as "New Canton Folk Songs," "Guangzhou Music," "Guangfu Folk Songs Taipa Zhuan." There are many colorful nursery rhyme materials with illustrations, explanations, and WeChat scan codes to listen to nursery rhymes. Teachers can choose some excellent nursery rhymes to learn, prepare lessons according to their needs, and correct the pronunciation of the Guangdong language. It plays a certain guiding role in deeply understanding the folk culture nurtured by nursery rhymes; Third, teachers must immerse themselves in the study of teaching methods. Reflect the student-centered diversity of teaching methods in practice, making the classroom attractive; Fourth, master and apply diversified modern teaching methods. For example, learning and applying image and video multimedia knowledge as an intuitive teaching aid can greatly improve the teaching effect (Ma, 2021 : 3).

### **Teaching forms of music education for art troupes**

"Single teaching method, low learning participation" is the current status of folk song teaching in primary school music classes in Guangzhou, leading to the single teaching mode of "teachers teach, students sing" this "teacher-oriented" education concept will directly lead to students' lack of independent learning opportunities, loss of interest in folk song learning, teaching in the form of classroom ineffective teaching, folk songs in school dissemination effect is minimal. Updating educational concepts is so urgent and necessary today. Orff, a German music educator, believes that "music is not a single sound. It is closely related to movement, dance, and language." "As we all know, the reason why the image of ethnic minorities singing and dancing is deeply rooted in the hearts of the people and has great artistic appeal is that their musical expression is comprehensive, which coincides with the concept of Orff's music education. Music is a comprehensive art. Therefore, the teaching method of music education should also be integrated. Guangdong nursery rhymes are used in various teaching forms to run through comprehensive art activities such as language recitation, body movement, music games, and musical situations to mobilize all students' senses, fully and independently feeling, understanding, and expressing folk songs. Students can obtain the most comprehensive music experience, broadening Guangdong songs' teaching form.

### **Conclusion**

It is understood that among the music education majors of art troupes in Guangdong Province, only a little music teaching in the Guangfu folk song classroom is carried out. For the first time, Guangfu folk songs were introduced into the music teaching system of art troupes, breaking the single current mode of folk music teaching. Based on the selection of excellent Guangdong songs, the comprehensive forms of expression used in folk song teaching, integrating reading, games, and situations, greatly stimulate students' enthusiasm for independent participation in folk song learning, improve the effectiveness of music teaching, truly realize the inheritance and dissemination of folk songs in the music classroom of the art troupe, and innovate the expression of Guangdong folk songs in the music teaching of the art troupe. Folk songs are a high-quality resource, and integrating Canton nursery rhymes into the art troupe's music teaching is an important channel for inheriting and developing Guangdong folk songs and a way to enrich and optimize the professional music teaching system of the art troupe education. The integration of the two will allow the seeds of Canton folk songs to find fertile soil for growth and the actors of the art troupe to enjoy the local characteristics of the folk songs.

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