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周文中的《草书》

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湖 南 师 范 大 学 音 乐 学 院 博 士 文 丛

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序

麓山脚下，湘江河畔，千年学府“岳麓书院”孕育了独特的湖湘文化。湖湘文化造就了一大批文人志士，在中国近现代史上留下了一串串响彻中华大地的美妙音符。湖湘音乐作为湖湘文化不可或缺的重要组成部分，以其独特的艺术魅力和地方特色吸引着一群音乐人在不断发掘和研究。

湖南师范大学音乐学院成立近五十年来，立足湖南，放眼世界，为湖南乃至全国培养了大量的音乐人才，为湖湘音乐和音乐文化的传承与发展，为音乐教育、音乐理论研究、音乐创作作出了不懈的努力。学院也在半个世纪的发展中不断成熟，尤其是最近几年，学院乘高校改革与发展的东风，借学校“211工程”重点大学发展的强力，其师资队伍建设、教学与科研等都取得了长足的进步。这次几位博士教师的论文结集出版，旨在总结阶段性成果，不断拓宽学术研究的视野。

景蔚岗博士构建了《中国传统笙管乐申论》一书，从创立“笙管乐系”的新体系入手，就渊源古老的中国传统笙管乐进行历史、文化、乐律学理论和实践的综合性研究，在研究对象、方法、理论、实践方面都有新的探索和突破，如提出传统乐种冠名、分类研究的从俗原则，完善和发展了分类理论，对中国古代十二律旋宫实践的可行性提出了新的见解。

郭声健博士的《音乐教育论》对音乐教育的历程、价值、教学、教材四个方面作了深入的理论探索和实践反思，回瞻了近五十余年音

乐教育的历程，丰富了音乐教育理论，对音乐教育实践有很强的指导意义。

何建军博士在美国西弗吉尼亚大学用英文完成的论文《周文中的“草书”》对周文中的代表作《草书》从作曲技法到美学特征作了全面深入的研究，归纳了周文中创作作品的风格特征，分析了周文中的创作历程，对周文中音乐创作研究是个有益的补充。

吴春福博士的《罗忠镕后期现代风格的音乐创作研究》以罗忠镕先生后期运用现代技法创作的十部作品为研究对象，从音高组织、曲式结构、复调手法以及乐队作品中的配器特色方面进行了全面的深入分析，从罗先生的动态创作发展过程中，归纳出作曲家将民族特色融入现代技法所形成的独特技术语言与风格特征，深入思考总结了罗先生现代音乐创作的美学内涵，为罗忠镕先生作品研究迈出了坚实而成功的一步，丰富了作曲技术理论领域的内容。

一套有价值的丛书需要展示的机会，湖南文艺出版社给予了良机；一群有造诣的学者需要发展的土壤，更多读者的关心与支持是最好的养料！我期待着音乐学院博士群体更多的成果，期待着音乐学院更上一层楼。

湖南师范大学校长 刘湘溶

2004年12月18日于长沙·岳麓山下

Chou Wen – Chung's *Cursive*

He Jian – Jun

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ABSTRACT

As the first contemporary Chinese composer recognized by the Western musical world, Chou Wen - Chung is widely acknowledged for his innovations and contributions to the profession. His music is a successful fusion of Eastern and Western musical language, and it has continued to receive critical acclaim.

Cursive (1963), a duet for flute and piano, is one of Chou's most important compositions. In this work, the composer tries to express the aesthetic principles of Chinese calligraphy musically. This thesis provides a thorough analysis of the musical materials and compositional techniques employed in *Cursive*, and based on this analysis, the author attempts to illustrate the compatible elements of Western and Chinese musics contained in the work. The author also highlights how certain musical feature of the work are related to Chinese calligraphy.

Although Chou has enjoyed success as a composer for about a half century, serious scholarly studies of his music were not done till the last decade. It is hoped that this study will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of Chou's musical creation.

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I would like to thank Dr. Terry Ewell for his patient guidance and valuable suggestions in the preparation of this document.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

A native Chinese who had his primary musical training in the West, Chou Wen - Chung is "the first Chinese composer in history to make his mark in Western music."¹ Chou is "a 20th century innovator just as daring as was Gabrieli back in the days of Venice's musical glory."² His music is "a remarkably successful fusion of Chinese tradition and sophisticated Western vocabulary and style."³ For a long time, Chou has been one of the few prominent Asian composers known in the Western musical world, and his practice has had a strong influence on East Asian composers.

1. Chou Wen - Chung's background

Chou Wen - Chung was born on July 28, 1923 in Chefoo (Yantai City, Shandong Province). He studied Violin, *er - hu* (a Chinese fiddle), harmonica, and *zheng* (a Chinese zither) in his early years. During the Sino - Japanese war (1937 - 45), Chou's family traveled to Shanghai, Guilin, and Chungqing, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering at the Chungqing National University. After the war, Chou went to Yale University on a four - year scholarship to study architecture. However, upon his arrival on the United States, Chou saw the opportunity to pursue the study of music, and instead of studying architecture, he entered the New England Conservatory of Music, studying composition with Carl Mckinley and Nicolas Slonimsky in 1946. In 1949, Chou came to New York to study with Bohuslav Martinù and Edgard Varèse. After receiving a master's degree from Columbia University in 1954, Chou worked as the technical assistant at the Columbia Electronic Music Laboratory. During the 1950s and 1960s, Chou worked as an instructor or researcher at several institutions, including The Greenwich House Music School (1953 - 56), the University of Illinois at Urbana - Champaign (1958 - 59), Brooklyn College (1961 - 62), Hunter College (1963 - 64), and the Horace Mann School (1962 - 66). In 1964, Chou joined the faculty of

¹ Alfred Frankenstein, "Symphony Plays Work by Chinese," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 4, 1959.

² William Mootz, *The Louisville Courier - Journal*, October, 1955.

³ Edward Murray, "Chou Wen - Chung," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), vol. 3, 359.

Columbia University. Later, he served as the chairman of the Music Division (1969 – 89), and the vice dean of the School of Arts (1976 – 87) at Columbia University. In 1978, Chou became the director of the Center for U.S. – China Arts Exchange at Columbia University.

Chou's awards and grants are numerous. In 1955, he obtained a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, which enabled him to conduct research for two years on traditional Chinese music and drama at Columbia University. He was also a recipient of Guggenheim Fellowships (1955, 1956), a National Institute of Arts and Letters Award (1963), a New York State Council for the Arts Commission Grant (1964), a William and Mona Copley Foundation Award (1966), an Alice M. Ditson Fund Grant (1969), an American International Music Fund Special Citation (1970), a Koussevitsky Music Foundation Commission Grant (1975), national Endowment for the Arts Commission Grants (1975, 1989), and a China Institute's Qingyun Award (1985).

Chou has completed about thirty compositions. His works have been performed throughout the United States, Asia, and Europe, and several of his orchestral works have been performed by the Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic, Orchestre Nationale (Paris), Japan Philharmonic, and Beijing Central Philharmonic. Most of his works are published by C. F. Peters Corporation; ten are recorded.

Chou Wen – Chung is “a fine and perceptive critic, balancing musicological analysis with a clear sense of the broader social and cultural ramifications of creativity.”⁴ His articles can be seen in some leading journals such as *Perspective of New Music*, *The Musical Quarterly*, *Current Musicology*, *Symphony Magazine*, as well as in many other publications.

2. Compositional style and the “variable modes”

Chou Wen – Chung's compositions can be classified into two categories: “pentatonic – related” or “variable modes – based” compositions. The first category consists of all of his early works – from *Landscapes* (1949) to *Poems of White Stone* (1959) — and a few later works. In these works, traditional Chinese pentatonic melodies serve as the basic materials dealing with pitch organization. Since the early 1960s, beginning from *Metaphors* (1960),

⁴ Brian Morton, “Chou Wen – Chung,” in *Contemporary Composers*, edited by Brian Morton and Pamela Collins (Chicago: St James Press, 1992), 181.

Chou Wen - Chung has developed a personal compositional method based on his "variable modes." Most of his works completed after 1960 belong to the second category.

Chou Wen - Chung's creation of "variable modes" was inspired by *I Ching*, the oldest surviving text in China. Although *I ching* was originally a book of divination, its rich philosophical connotations have had significant influence on Chinese culture. In the Chinese language, *I* means "Change," while *Ching* means "classical book." Thus, *I Ching* is normally translated into English as "Book of Changes." By observing nature, the ancient Chinese believed that "changes" were the only constant phenomena of the universe. According to *I Ching*, the change from one pole to the other is the universal law, and everything can be described by observing its change of *Yin* and *Yang*. *Yin* and *Yang* represent two polarities: *Yin* refers to the feminine, passive, or negative principle in nature, while *Yang* to masculine, active, or positive principle. In *I Ching*, two broken lines (- -) represents *Yin*, while one unbroken line (—) represents *Yang*. Putting any three *Yin* or *Yang* lines together can produce a trigram. There are eight permutations of trigrams, each of them has different symbolic meaning. Example 1 shows the eight trigrams of *I Ching*.

Example 1. The Eight Trigrams of *I Chig*

--	—	--	—	--	—	--	—
--	--	—	—	--	--	—	—
--	--	--	--	—	—	—	—
<i>Kun</i>	<i>Ken</i>	<i>Kan</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Chen</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Tui</i>	<i>Chien</i>
(earth)	(mountain)	(rain)	(wind)	(thunder)	(sun)	(lake)	(heaven)

The combination of any two of these trigrams produces a hexagram, called *Gua* in Chinese. There is a total of sixty - four hexagrams (see Example 2, page 4). *I Ching* provides a thorough interpretation of these sixty - four hexagrams.

Example 2. Table of the Sixty - Four Hexagrams of *I Ching*

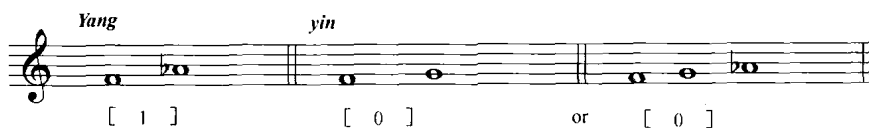
8 pf	7 sze	6 sung	5 hsü	4 mäng	3 kun	2 khwän	1 kien
16 yü	15 kien	14 tâ yü	13 thung zän	12 phü	11 thái	10 li	9 hsiao kien
24 fü	23 po	22 pf	21 shih ho	20 kwän	19 lin	18 k'u	17 sui
32 häng	31 hsien	30 li	29 khan	28 tâ kwo	27 i	26 tâ k'u	25 wü wang
40 kieh	39 kien	38 khwei	37 hsü zän	36 ming i	35 jin	34 tâ kwang	33 thun
48 jing	47 khwän	46 shäng	45 jhui	44 k'au	43 kwai	42 yi	41 sun
56 lü	55 fang	54 kwei mei	53 kien	52 kan	51 kan	50 ting	49 ko
64 wei ji	63 ki ji	62 hsiao kwo	61 lung fu	60 kieh	59 hwän	58 tui	57 sun

Chou Wen – Chung’s “variable modes” have evolved over three decades. Although there are some differences between his earlier experiments and later practice, all of his modes used in different periods have the following characteristics in common:

A. Each mode partitions an octave into three segments; each segment covers a major third (interval class(ic)4). This corresponds to the trigrams of *I Ching*: each trigram consists of three *Yin* or *Yang* lines.

B. The minor third(ic 3) is analogous to the *Yang* line, and the major second(ic 2), or a major second followed by a semitone(ic 2 + 1), for the *Yin* line. Chou Wen – Chung uses binary codes “0” and “1” to indicate his modal structure: “0” represents the *Yin* segment, and “1” the *Yang*.⁵

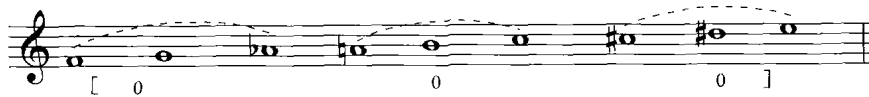
Example 3. *Yin* and *Yang* Segments of Chou Wen – Chung’s “Variable Modes”



C. There are eight “variable modes” which correspond to the eight trigrams of *I Ching*. Each mode can be in an ascending or descending pattern and both have the same intervallic structure. Below (Example 4) are the eight modes used in *Cursive*. For the convenience of comparing the structure of these modes, all the modes are transposed to begin with the same pitch. The beginning note of a mode will be called “principal tone” in this thesis.

Example 4. The Eight “Variable Modes” Used in *Cursive*

Earth(e): [000]



Mountain(m): [001]



⁵ Chun – Ming Kenneth Kwan, *Compositional Design in Recent Works by Chou Wen – Chung* (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York, Buffalo, 1996), 18 – 19.

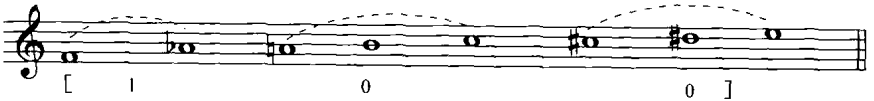
Rain(r): [010]



Wind(w): [011]



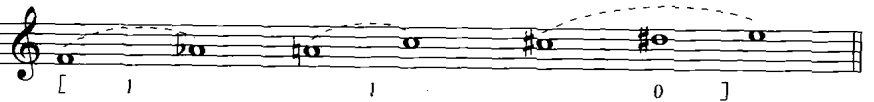
Thunder(t): [100]



Sun(s): [101]



Lake(l): [110]



Heaven(h): [111]



D. The modes are always used in a pattern combining two modes which go to the different directions, one ascending and the other descending. It corresponds to the hexagrams of *I Ching*: each hexagram consists of a pair of trigrams. It also reflects the opposition of *Yin* and *Yang*. In most cases, Chou uses two different modes in the modal pairs.

3. Preliminary comments on *Cursive*

Chou Wen - Chung's deep appreciation for Chinese calligraphy resulted in his composing *Cursive*, a duet for flute and piano. The work was finished in 1963, when the composer was teaching at Hunter College. It was premiered by Harvey Sollberger and Charles Wuorinen on

January 13, 1964, at the McMillin Theater, New York City.⁶

As one of Chou Wen – Chung’s principal works, *Cursive* has continued to receive positive comments. Viewing Chou’s music, Dale Higbee wrote: “*Cursive* for flute and piano, referring to strokes and angles used in handwriting and essentially based on analogy with Chinese calligraphy, seems more contrived to me, but it is a considerable tour de force, nonetheless, and splendidly performed.”⁷ Brian Morton pointed out: “*Cursive*, a duo piece, contains a level of internal variation, along the lines of Varese’s ‘organization of sound,’ which is far beyond the earlier work (of Chou), and there is no sign in recent compositions of that adventurousness being compromised by either academicism or a comfortable personal manner.”⁸ Edward Murray gave his comment in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*: “Care in the treatment of single notes is particularly evident in *Cursive*, the title of which bears witness to Chou’s continuing concern with the simultaneous spontaneity and discipline of Chinese calligraphy. Microtonal variations and similar subtle adjustments are found in the flute part; in general, the performers are given an unusual degree of rhythmic freedom within a controlled scheme.”⁹

Chinese calligraphy has significant influence on Chou Wen – Chung’s musical creation. The essential aesthetic principles of the Chinese calligraphy can be seen in most of Chou’s works, among which, *Cursive*, as the title suggested, most directly shows the connection with this old Eastern art. The relationship between Chinese calligraphy and Chou’s *Cursive* will be detailed in the Chapter 4.

⁶ *Cursive* was recorded by Composers Recording Inc. (CRI SP 251), and was included in a CD set of the selected works of Chou Wen – Chung (CRI CD 691) issued in 1995.

⁷ Dale Higbee, record review, *American Recorder*, USA XI/4 (Fall 1970), 14.2.

⁸ Brian Morton, “Chou Wen – Chung,” in *Contemporary Composers*, edited by Brian Morton and Pamela Collins (Chicago: StJames Press, 1992), 181 – 182.

⁹ Edward Murray, “Chou Wen – Chung,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), vol. 3, 359.

CHAPTER 2

FORM AND MATERIALS OF *CURSIVE*

Cursive consists of two sections, each subdivided into three parts. The second section is an abbreviated reiteration of the first section. The musical form is diagrammed below.

Musical Structure of *Cursive*

Section I				Section II			
Introduction +	A	+ B	+ C	A' +	B'	+ C'	+ Coda
mm. 1	2 – 25	26 – 44	45 – 72	73 – 76	77 – 95	96 – 101	102

1. Introduction and Part A

The first measure is an introduction where the flute plays repeated eighth – notes with microtonal changes. Although the introduction is short, its recapitulation at the end of the piece (m. 102) brings out its significance, unifying the musical form.

Part A begins in the second measure where the piano draws an undulating melodic line. Two basic materials dealt with the pitches are presented in the introduction and Part A: “variable modes” and “narrow register materials (defined on pages 14 – 16).” Example 5 lists all the “variable modes” employed in Part A.

Example 5. The “Variable Modes” used in *Cursive* Part A

Example 5 shows six musical staves illustrating variable modes used in Part A of *Cursive*. The notation is in treble clef with a piano dynamic marking. The modes are:

- t [100] (m. 2)
- l [110] (mm. 4-5)
- m [001] (m. 7)
- w [011] (m. 9)
- w [011] (m. 11)
- m [001] (m. 13)