

Proposal for A Sino-European Musical Cultural Exchange Programme



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Introduction

The cultural exchange between countries of the European Union and P.R of China is becoming an increasingly important dimension in Sino European relations. However the people of Europe and China still have rudimentary knowledge about each other's cultures.

One of the most important aspects of culture is music. Europe was the cradle of the birth of classical music, symphony orchestras and many of the great world composers are from the EU member states. Many of these are well known to the Chinese public. European folk and more contemporary world music however is not as well known to the Chinese public and the people of Europe have a very rudimentary idea of traditional Chinese Music.

European folk music is usually thought of as the music of traditional peasant societies, rooted in work and in fixed customs. It is rural music; taught, without being written down, from one generation to the next. However, folk music is affected by, and interwoven with, art music and popular music, of which the different genres are often hard to distinguish. There are numerous times that folk music is sung and played. Folk music is sung as lullabies, and while cooking or weaving. It is played while dancing. Folk music is sung while working by sailors, lumberjacks, shepherds, and farmers.

As folk music was not traditionally spread through written notation, many songs have been lost. However, an incredible amount of folk music does exist in written form and folk music archives exist. These archives grew in the early twentieth century, as people began to focus on saving or preserving 'dying' folk music.

The Chinese believe that music is an expression of harmony that exists among heaven, earth and man, and nature has provided man with eight kinds of such materials to build musical instruments. Therefore traditionally, Chinese instruments are also classified according to the type of material they are made from. They are stone, metal, silk, bamboo, wood, skin, gourd and clay.

Stone - A good example is the Pien Ching. It is a set of L-shaped stones, of different quantities and sizes, hanging from a stand and struck with a special hammer. They are played only at court and during religious ceremonies.

Metal - Includes Bells, Luo (gongs) and Bo (cymbals).

Silk - Refers to the stringed instruments. The stringed instruments can be further divided into two categories: the bowed strings (e.g. Erhu) and the plucked strings (e.g. Guzheng).

Bamboo - the majority of woodwind instruments are made from bamboo. Examples include the dizi (flute), suona (trumpet).

Wood - This section includes a large variety of small percussion instruments including wooden blocks, boxes and xylophones with wooden blocks. These were used by Buddhist monks during religious ceremonies.

Skin - Drums are often covered with different types of animal skins along the top or head.

Gourd - a type of plant. A sheng (mouth organ) is one of the oldest Chinese instruments made out of hollowed-out pumpkin-like vegetables. It consists of a wind-chest and a number of bamboo pipes set in a circle. The sheng imitates the sound of a phoenix.

Clay - The ocarina, a small, egg-shaped wind instrument (with six holes for the finger tips) made of clay.

The variations of rhythm, beat, tone quality, and embellishments in Chinese music are highly distinctive and unlike their Western counterparts. This is mainly due to the unique sounds and playing styles of traditional Chinese musical instruments.

Most Chinese instruments are performed as solo form as well as a part of an ensemble or orchestra. A Chinese orchestra is a mixture of many cultural traditions. Similar to a western philharmonic orchestra, a full Chinese orchestra is made up of four sections as below:

Plucked-strings - Pipa, Liuqin, Yangqin, Ruan, Yueqin, Guzheng, Guqin, Sanxian, etc.

Bowed-strings - Erhu, Jinghu, Gaohu, Gehu, Banhu, Matouqin, etc.

Blown Woodwind instruments - Dizi, Xiao, Guan, Xun, Souna, Sheng, etc.

Percussion instruments - Bangu, Bo, Bianzhong, Tanggu, Muyu, Luo, Yunluo, etc.

Sino European Musical Cultural Exchange

Building on the nest of Chinese and European Traditional and Folk Music we propose through a five year strategic cooperation between China and EU countries for musical exchange. The project would be proposed as a co-operation between China's leading contemporary composer Bian Liu Nian / Liu Nian Arts Studio in close cooperation with CCTV and local musical organizations or festival(to be identified in close cooperation with local TV Media and or Eurovision (EBU).

Bian Liu Nian is a leading chinese contemporary and traditional composer with wide network in the music world of china. He has the last 10 years been musical director and composer for China Central Television (CCTV) Spring Festival TV Productions. He has produced more than 100 television musical productions and won the coveted TV Golden Eagle Award (Chinese Television Oscar Award).

Bian Liu Nian is founder of the New Folk Music Association. He is member of the National Musical Instrument association, associate of China Light Music Committee, member of the National Professional Music Producer association and the MIDI Association.

Bian Liu Nian performs on a wide range of string instruments but is best known for his performances on Cello and the Chinese instrument Erhu and Satar. He has composed some 1000 musical pieces for many leading Chinese vocalists, instrumentals and large orchestras. The cooperation will be built on the successful cooperation of Liu Nian and Norway's folk music (2002-2004) sponsored by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see report attached). The exchange would include six projects covering different regions of Europe:

1. Anglosaxan (UK and Ireland)
2. South European (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Malta, Turkey, Greece)
3. Central Europe (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg)
4. Slavic (Slovenia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Romania)

5. Baltic States (Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania)
6. Nordic Countries (Finland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Iceland)

Project Modality

1. Identification of Artists

In cooperation with the Cultural Attaches of the respective embassies and European Union Representation in China a short list of minimum 5 artists will be identified from each region and will be invited to participate in the exchange.

Liu Nian Music Arts Studio will introduce minimum of 5 Chinese artists covering appropriate instruments/vocal mix.

2. Chinese artist tour Europe

- a) Musicians meet in venue of European region
- b) 5 concerts to be performed throughout the region

Followed by CCTV Music Channel Producer and Camera for production of 2X30 minute programs in China and European Countries

3. European artists tour to China

- a) Studiowork in Beijing for production of DVD/CD
- b) 5 concerts to be performed throughout China
- c) One CCTV Special TV Studio Music Performance to be aired both in China and Europe.

Budget (one project)

Item	Pax	Unit Price		Sum	
		Euro	CNY	Euro	CNY
Travel and Diem Europe	15	€ 4,500	CNY 44,081	€ 67,500	CNY 673,621
Travel and Diem China	15	€ 3,500	CNY 34,285	€ 52,500	CNY 523,928
Concert Fees Europe				€ 2,000	CNY 19,592
Concert Fees China				€ 1,000	CNY 9,796
TV Studio Production				€ 30,000	CNY 299,387
DVD/CD Production				€ 40,000	CNY 399,183
Sum				€ 125,500	CNY 1,925,507
Adm Overhead (10%)				€ 12,550	CNY 192,551
Grand Total One Project				€ 138,050	CNY 2,118,057