

Technical Realization of Key Aesthetic Principles in Guzheng Performance

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Abstract : Drawn on Confucian and Taoist philosophy and long-established tradition of aesthetic ideals, the Art of the Chinese Zither (Xishan Qinkuang), a classic work by Chinese music scholar Xu Shangyin in 1643, distilled twenty-four practicing principles for the Chinese zither. This work has influenced the practice of guzheng to the present day. Whilst the principles were described in detail, how they can actually be achieved on a technical level remains to be explored. This study focuses on three key practicing principles: yuan (roundness), liu (fluidness), and su (swiftness), and examines how the playing techniques developed by Master Zhao Manqin contribute to the implementation of the principles. The study concludes that knowledge of the technicality of fingering positioning before and after plucking motion is critical to the realization of these principles.

Keywords : Chinese music aesthetics, practicing principles of the Chinese zither, guzheng playing techniques, Zhao Manqin's fingering techniques, Xishan Qinkuang

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