

A Performance Guide to Fan-Ling Su's
Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song 《九如之頌》, and Lion Dance 《舞獅》 :
Context, Analysis, and Interpretation of Contemporary Taiwanese Violin Works
by
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ABSTRACT

Fan-Ling Su (蘇凡凌) is a contemporary Taiwanese composer whose music blends traditional Taiwanese and Chinese cultural influences with modern Western compositional techniques. This research paper focuses on two of her works for violin: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song* and *Lion Dance*. *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis* reflects the symbolic phrase Jiu Ru (九如) representing blessings and longevity, while *Lion Dance* draws inspiration from Taiwan's festive temple traditions, expressing energy, rhythm, and community spirit. Together, these pieces highlight Su's ability to transform cultural imagery and ritual symbolism into vivid musical expression.

In this document, the author will explore the cultural and musical contexts of both works, analyze their form, harmonic language, and symbolic materials, and provide a performance guide based on personal communication with the composer and her own notes, offering an artistic interpretation and a scholarly contribution to the modern violin repertoire.

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CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Brief History of Taiwan and Taiwanese Music

Taiwan is an island located between the South China Sea and the East China Sea. As a country surrounded by ocean, it became a site of cultural exchange, and a meeting point for people and sea routes.



Figure 1.1: Map of Taiwan¹

Therefore, Taiwan’s culture is layered by Indigenous Austronesian traditions, Chinese migration, and Japanese colonial influences. Due to its close geographic distance

¹ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. “Taiwan,” accessed January 16, 2026, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Taiwan>

to mainland China and a series of historical events, Taiwan shares many cultural backgrounds and values with Chinese society. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, larger-scale migration during the late Ming dynasty period contributed to the spread of Chinese cultural practices, including philosophical and social values, across the island².

During the Qing dynasty (1683–1895), Confucianism became institutionalized through governance, education, and ritual practices. As Chinese literary culture expanded, music closely related to ritual and communal life became more widespread. Traditional Chinese operatic genres such as Nanguan (南管) and Beiguan (北管) were commonly performed in temple ceremonies and festivals, shaping local musical culture through their emphasis on rhythm, gesture, and symbolic meaning³.

During the Japanese colonial period (1895–1945), Western music education was introduced systematically in Taiwan. Music schools were established, formal music notation was adopted, and conservatory-style training became part of the education system. Western instruments such as the violin and piano, along with Western harmonic practices, entered Taiwanese music education. Military bands and school music programs also expanded during this period, increasing familiarity with the Western tonal system⁴.

After the end of Japanese rule in 1945, Taiwan entered a new stage of cultural and musical development under the Republic of China. Following 1949, many musicians, composers, and educators relocated from mainland China to Taiwan, bringing strong

² *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. “Taiwan,” accessed January 16, 2026, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Taiwan>

³ Bell Yung, *Chinese Music: An Overview* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 78–85.

⁴ Yu-Hsiu Lee, “Western Music Education in Taiwan during the Japanese Colonial Period,” *Journal of Asian Music Studies* 6, no. 2 (2011): 33–48.

traditions of Western classical music and Chinese cultural practices. Music education during this period focused mainly on Western classical repertoire, formal theory, and performance training, while selected forms of traditional Chinese music continued to be preserved within institutional settings⁵.

From 1949 to 1987, Taiwan was under martial law, which influenced cultural expression and artistic development. During this time, local Taiwanese folk music, ritual music, and indigenous traditions were less emphasized in academic music education, although they remained active in community and religious life, particularly in temple festivals and traditional celebrations. These practices preserved strong rhythmic characteristics and symbolic meanings⁶.

After the lifting of martial law in 1987, composers in Taiwan began to reexamine issues of cultural identity and artistic direction. Contemporary Taiwanese music increasingly reflects a combination of Western compositional techniques and local cultural elements. This historical development provides important context for understanding modern Taiwanese violin works, in which Western instruments are often used to express cultural imagery, movement, and ritual energy⁷.

Role of Female Composers in Taiwan's Classical Music Landscape

As access to higher education increased in Taiwan, more women received formal musical training in different fields, including composition, and became active in

⁵ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. "Taiwan," accessed January 16, 2026, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Taiwan>

⁶ Tsang-Houei Hsu, "Traditional Music in Taiwan," *Asian Music* 12, no. 2 (1981): 1–15.

⁷ Joanna Lee, "Contemporary Music in Taiwan after the Lifting of Martial Law," *Journal of Asian Music Studies* 8, no. 1 (2014): 45–60.

contemporary music. After World War II and especially from 1968 when Taiwan's Nine-Year Compulsory Education policy took effect along with the economic growth,⁸ women's education in Taiwan rose to a level roughly equal to that of men. This rise in women's educational attainment also influenced broader cultural values and social life, including developments in contemporary music composition. According to Lin-Ni Liao's research, among Taiwanese composers born between 1955 and 1969 identified in her study, women already accounted for more than half of active composers (29 of 57), and in the following generation born between 1970 and 1979, women represented the majority (33 of 41)⁹.

Although women have become increasingly active in composition, their contributions have not always been fully recognized in historical accounts, which has led to new research focusing specifically on Taiwanese women composers. Earlier documentations on Western art music in Taiwan often focused on major music schools, established male composers, and the development of orchestras and conservatories, while women composers appeared in brief or were not mentioned at all. Thus, the picture of Taiwan's contemporary music life was incomplete and did not fully reflect the number and activity of women working in composition¹⁰.

⁸ Yujen Chen Tobita, "Historical Background and Pedagogical Analysis of Piano Works by Selected Taiwanese Women" (PhD diss., Texas Tech University, 2004), 45, <http://hdl.handle.net/2346/14442>.

⁹ Lin-Ni Liao, "Taiwanese Women Composers and Mixed-Music with Their Cultural Heritage," *Contemporary Music Review* 37, no. 1-2 (2018): 164.

¹⁰ Tobita, "Historical Background," 1.

However, this situation has begun to change in the last few decades. Researchers and scholars have started to gather information on Taiwanese women composers, document their education and careers, and analyze their works in more detail. Research on women composers in categories including electroacoustic, mixed music, Western art music and dissertations on Taiwanese women, show a clear effort to correct earlier gaps and to place women's contributions within the broader history of Taiwan's classical music landscape.¹¹ This research provides an important foundation for discussing individual figures such as Fan-Ling Su in a more balanced way.

Taiwanese women composers such as Fan-Ling Su, Shih-Chi Pan, Shih-Hui Chen, and Sansan Chien represent an active presence in contemporary classical composition, often engaging with both Western and Taiwanese musical traditions. Their compositions encompass many different aspects of Taiwanese culture including traditional folk elements, Taiwanese instruments or even Eastern or local philosophical ideas. While they compose within Western musical forms such as the sonata or concerto, these composers imbue their works by adding the scales, rhythms and tonalities of their home culture.

Against a global background where women composers are still underrepresented, the growing visibility of women in Taiwan's contemporary composition scene is particularly significant.¹² While many major international orchestras still only feature a relatively small number of female voices,¹³ Taiwan has developed a landscape where women are a regular and expected part of the professional world. This shift from a male

¹¹ Liao, "Taiwanese Women Composers," 161.

¹² Liao, "Taiwanese Women Composers," 164.

¹³ *Equality & Diversity in Global Repertoire*, Donne, Women in Music, 2023, <https://donne-uk.org/report-2023/>.

dominated history to a present where women are so active shows how much impact Taiwan's education system has had on its culture. As Lin-Ni Liao explains:

The generation born between 1970 and 1981 represents a real turning point; women composers are no longer a minority but have become a dominant force, representing nearly 90% of the active composers in this age group. This phenomenon is almost unique in the world and highlights the effectiveness of Taiwan's musical education system in fostering female talent.¹⁴

This high level of participation has allowed Taiwanese female composers to do more than just fit into the existing Western classical tradition. Instead, they are helping to change it.¹⁵ Due to the level and the amount of active female composers in Taiwan, these composers have built a strong community that encourages mixing Taiwanese identity with modern Western styles.¹⁶ Their success proves that when women have the same access to education and jobs, the music scene becomes much more diverse and complete.¹⁷

¹⁴ Liao, "Taiwanese Women Composers," 164.

¹⁵ Liao, "Taiwanese Women Composers," 161.

¹⁶ Liao, "Taiwanese Women Composers," 168–70.

¹⁷ Tobita, "Historical Background," 112.

The Cultural Background and Origins of Jiu Ru and Lion Dance

In this section, the author explores the origins of the two primary cultural contexts that require clarification in order to analyze these pieces through a rigorous and logical methodology.

Jiu Ru comes from Tien Bao poem (天保), Xiao Ya section (小雅) which is from Shijing (the Classic of Poetry 詩經).¹⁸ Shijing is the oldest existing collection of Chinese poetry, written between 1000 and 600 BCE, According to The Book of Rites (禮記), text represents emotions; vocal represents the transfer from text to sound; dance represents the rhythm from the body movement.¹⁹ These three elements were inseparable in performance at that time. Therefore, Shijing was not merely reading material but also served as lyrics to songs that accompanied dance.

Following that, the author will dive into how these poems are classified into distinct musical styles with specific instrumentation that inform the poem Tien Bao.

1. Classification and Musicality

The three main musical styles in Shijing include Guofeng (Folk Songs), Ya (Courtly Hymns), and Song (Sacred Odes).²⁰ The Xiao Ya chapter is classified as Ya (Courtly Hymns), which serves as music for imperial court ceremonies or noble banquets.

¹⁸ *The Classic of Poetry*, trans. James Legge (London: Trübner & Co., 1876), 256–58.

¹⁹ *The Li Ki [Book of Rites]*, trans. James Legge, vol. 28 of *The Sacred Books of the East* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), 92–94.

²⁰ Joseph S. C. Lam, "Shijing," *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.49399>.

The piece Jiu Ru belongs to this specific category; as a result, its musical style is typically solemn, grand, and highly structured.

2. Rhetorical Methodology:

While Shijing often utilizes Xing (興, evocative imagery) as an opening, the "Jiu Ru" section of Tien Bao employs a very clear rhetorical strategy:

Fu (賦, Narrative/Direct Expression): The poem uses a "direct narrative" approach, listing the nine blessings like a formal catalog. This parallel structure typically corresponds to stable rhythmic patterns or repetitive motifs.²¹

Bi (比, Metaphor): The core of this technique is the character Ru (如 - "like" or "as"). It translates abstract wishes into concrete natural imagery, such as mountains, hills, and ridges. This provides the composer with significant "tone painting" opportunities, for example, utilizing the heavy textures of low brass or strings to evoke the physical stability of a mountain.²²

3. Instrumentation: The "Eight Sounds" (Ba Yin)

For the performance of Xiao Ya at court banquets or rituals, the instrumentation primarily features the Metal, Stone, Silk, and Bamboo categories of the Ba Yin.²³ This focus on refined materials distinguishes court music from folk styles, which relied more heavily on Earth (clay) and Skin (drums).

²¹ Pauline Yu, *The Reading of Imagery in the Chinese Poetic Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 44–49.

²² Yu, *The Reading of Imagery*, 52–55.

²³ Alan R. Thrasher, *Chinese Musical Instruments* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1996), 5–9.

For a work like Tien Bao, the typical ancient instrumental configuration includes:

Metal (金): Bianzhong (Bronze Bells). Known as the "soul" of court music, these represent the sound of authority and law.

Stone (石): Bianqing (Stone Chimes). These produce a clear, lingering tone.

Silk (絲): Qin and Se. These plucked strings provide delicate melodic lines that enhance the elegant atmosphere.

Bamboo (竹): Yue, Xiao, and Di. These flutes provide the sustained wind timbres necessary for the melodic foundation.

Skin (革): Pedestal Drum (建鼓). This instrument is responsible for leading the ensemble and guiding the rhythm.²⁴

The imagery associated with Jiu Ru is widely recognized in classical Chinese literature, most famously in the *Shijing*, where a sequence of similes invokes mountains, rivers, and trees as symbols of stability, prosperity, and longevity. While this document draws on the well-known literary tradition of the *Shijing* to interpret the symbolic qualities of Jiu Ru, the composer has clarified that her immediate inspiration came through *Suiyuan Biji* (隨園筆記)²⁵, in connection with the “Tiandi” chapter of the *Zhuangzi* (莊子)²⁶. Although the structured sequence of Jiu Ru is not formally presented in *Suiyuan Biji*, the reference engages with a broader cultural and philosophical

²⁴ Thrasher, *Chinese Musical Instruments*, 12.

²⁵ *Suiyuan Biji* is a Qing dynasty collection of essays by Yuan Mei (1716–1797), reflecting on literature, philosophy, and everyday life.

²⁶ *Zhuangzi* is a Daoist philosophical text attributed to Zhuang Zhou (c. 369–286 BCE)

framework. In this sense, it operates on two levels: the imagery rooted in the *Shijing* tradition and the philosophical perspective associated with Daoist thought. The composer's approach therefore reframes these longstanding cultural symbols within a contemporary musical context rather than directly reproducing a single classical source.²⁷

The second primary cultural context in this study is the Lion Dance (舞獅). While the "Nine Ruyis" represents the literary and courtly Ya tradition, the Lion Dance embodies the ritualistic, physical, and communal aspects of Taiwanese culture.

The Lion Dance is a ritual of collective bravery. Ancient Chinese used the image of the lion and the sound of the drum and fireworks to build up their own morale and scare away the negative energy and bad luck that people used to believe came from the mountain spirits.²⁸ It is often presented by a giant puppet made of bamboo and cloth, painted red, and danced to the loud beat of drums and gongs in today's life. Ancient Chinese believed that a monster named Nian (年) would attack the villages during every Chinese New Year, eating crops and children. The villagers realized that the Nian beast had a sensitive reaction to color red. Because red is the most vibrant color and represents fire and the sun (the opposite of Nian's cold, mountain/sea nature), this, along with the explosive noise from the drum, would send the beast Nian running in panic.²⁹

Before focusing on the Taiwanese tradition, it is important to note that the Lion Dance is divided into two primary regional styles: the Northern Lion (北獅) and the

²⁷ Fan-Ling Su, personal communication with the author, March 2026.

²⁸ Dorothy Perkins, *Encyclopedia of China: History and Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999), 284.

²⁹ Juwen Zhang, "Lunar New Year," in *The Oxford Handbook of American Folklore and Folklife Studies*, ed. Simon J. Bronner (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 342–43.

Southern Lion (南獅). The Northern Lion, historically favored by the imperial courts, is characterized by its lifelike, shaggy fur and acrobatic, playful movements that mimic the behavior of a real animal.³⁰ In contrast, the Southern Lion, from which the Taiwanese tradition descends, is more symbolic and aggressive. It is identified by a single horn on the lion's head and a mirror on its forehead to reflect evil spirits, with movements grounded heavily in martial arts stances.³¹

Taiwanese society adopted this Southern style Lion Dance due to the island's unique "Frontier" history during the 17th and 18th centuries. As immigrants from the Fujian region settled in Taiwan, they faced frequent ethnic conflicts and a lack of official government protection.³² Consequently, local communities formed self-defense units and martial arts schools. Because formal military training was often restricted or viewed with suspicion and closely monitored by ruling authorities. These villagers used the Lion Dance as a "martial disguise."³³ Under the cover of a religious festival or communal celebration, young men could practice the strength, agility, and footwork of Kung Fu without drawing unwanted attention.³⁴

This necessity for defense led to the creation of the distinct Taiwanese "Green Lion" or "Closed-Mouth Lion," where the lion's head was often built sturdier than its

³⁰ William Hu, "The Chinese Lion Dance: A Brief History," *Journal of Chinese Martial Arts* 1, no. 1 (2010): 22.

³¹ Hu, "The Chinese Lion Dance," 25.

³² Hsun Chang, "Traditional Arts and Ethnic Identity: The Case of Hakka Lion Dance in Taiwan," *Journal of Hakka Studies* 4, no. 2 (2011): 86.

³³ Terrell J. Joubert, *The Lion Dance: A Guide to the Ancient Tradition* (New Orleans: Joubert Martial Arts, 2013), 45–47.

³⁴ Chang, "Traditional Arts and Ethnic Identity," 88.

Cantonese counterparts to serve as a functional rattan shield in actual combat.³⁵ Today, the Taiwanese Lion Dance is a centerpiece of the Tin-thau (陣頭) folk parade culture. It serves as more than just a performance; it is a physical manifestation of the bravery and defensive spirit required to protect the community's heritage, effectively transforming the ancient myth of the Nian into a modern symbol of Taiwanese resilience.



Figure 1.2: Lion Dance in Martial Art Stances³⁶

³⁵ Liang Daiqi, "Moving for a Hundred Years: Taiwan Lions—From Martial Arts Troupes to Art Ensembles" [舞動百年的台灣獅 從武團到藝陣的獅藝文化], *Taipei Pictorial* [台北畫刊], no. 665 (January 2026), Taipei Travel Net, <https://www.travel.taipei/zh-tw/pictorial/article/66561>.

³⁶ Yao-zheng Cai and Zheng-yan Chen, photograph of Dalongdong Golden Lion Troupe, in Daiqi Liang, "Moving for a Hundred Years: Taiwan Lions—From Martial Arts Troupes to Art Ensembles" [舞動百年的台灣獅 從武團到藝陣的獅藝文化], *Taipei Pictorial* [台北畫刊], no. 665 (January 2026), images courtesy of Association of Taipei Dalongdong Golden Lion Troupe Promotion, Taipei Travel Net, <https://www.travel.taipei/zh-tw/pictorial/article/66561>.

Biography of Fan-Ling Su, focusing on her compositional philosophy and influences



Figure 1.3: Fan-Ling Su ³⁷

Fan-Ling Su was born in 1955 in a quiet and small town, Xinpu in Hsinchu County, Taiwan. It is a town known for its rich agriculture profile and Hakka³⁸ background. Su did not just grow up exposed to music; she grew up in a musical environment enriched by Hakka tradition. Her professional works are sophisticated and innovative that bridges the gap between ancient Eastern philosophies and the rigorous analytical structures of the Western world.

³⁷ "Fan-Ling Su," photograph, National Culture and Arts Foundation (NCAF), Taiwan Composers Database, accessed January 21, 2026,

https://archive.ncafroc.org.tw/composer/composer_file?id=4028888d66ba9e070166ba9edb181689.

³⁸ The Hakka is a subgroup of Han Chinese known for their distinct language and cultural traditions, with a significant population in the mid-northern regions of Taiwan.

Su's musical education started in Taiwan with piano lessons beginning in the fourth grade and later under the early guidance of mentors including mentors Zhao-Zhen Yang, Lung-Hsin Wen. She continued her studies in Vienna, Austria. At Music and Arts University of the City of Vienna (MUK) and University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (MDW) where she studied electronic music and modern theory. This period gave her the "rational" tools she needed such as Western music theory to build complex sonic architectures. However, Su returned to Taiwan to ground her technical skill in something more personal. She eventually completed her doctorate under Hwang-Long Pan at the Taipei National University of the Arts, solidifying her place as a bridge builder between cultures.

Rationality comes up when describing Su's compositional philosophy. "Su Fan-ling's musical language has always focused on rational thinking... She believes the logic of modern music should be reasonable..."³⁹ One example may be seen in her piano piece, *Temple Fair* (廟會). While AI or some composers might try to mimic the literal noise of a street festival, Su does the opposite. She uses Western non-functional harmony to capture "Chinese Romanticism", a quiet, internal feeling of a pious heart.

One of Su's most important contributions is her work with Hakka music. She does not just "arrange" folk songs; she reshapes them into new pieces. In *Hakka Celebration Overture*, she combines a full symphonic orchestra with a traditional Hakka Bayin ensemble, an instrumental group commonly used in Hakka ceremonial and festive

³⁹ National Culture and Arts Foundation, "SU, Fan-Ling," Taiwan Composers Database, accessed January 26, 2026, https://archive.ncafroc.org.tw/composer/composer_file?id=4028888d66ba9e070166ba9edb181689&lang=en.

contexts, typically featuring winds, strings, and percussion.⁴⁰ This work demonstrates that music from her local background can support a large, complex orchestral structure.

From the award-winning *Eight Trigrams* (八卦) to the deeply moving *Ancestors' Footprints* (先祖的腳印), her range of works is versatile and varied. Today, as a professor at National Tsing Hua University and the Chair of the Chinese Woman Composers' Association, she continues to push the boundaries of what "modern" music can be, proving that the most innovative sounds often come from a deep understanding of one's own roots.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Bell Yung, "Hakka Music," in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, Vol. 7: East Asia—China, Japan, and Korea*, ed. Robert C. Provine, Yosihiko Tokumaru, and J. Lawrence Witzleben (New York: Routledge, 2002), 236–238.

⁴¹ 客家委員會 [Hakka Affairs Council], "台灣客籍作曲家-蘇凡凌小傳 (1955-)," 客家雲 Hakka Cloud, last modified January 27, 2022, accessed January 26, 2026, <https://cloud.hakka.gov.tw/Details?p=10861&pid=158409>.

CHAPTER 2

HYMN OF THE NINE RUYIS – THE BIRTHDAY SONG

Background, Context of the Piece, and the Meanings of Jiu Ru

*Hymn of the Nine Ruyis - The Birthday Song*⁴² is a solo violin work by Fan-Ling Su that draws upon the philosophical concept of Jiu Ru as its primary source of inspiration.

Although the term Jiu Ru (in its original context in Tian Bao) refers to the ninefold repetition of the word Ru, this document adopts the translation “Nine Ruyis” to reflect the symbolic reinterpretation within the composition. In later cultural usage, ruyi (如意) carries connotations of auspicious fulfillment and well wishing.⁴³ Within the context of this birthday tribute, the title may therefore be understood as evoking nine blessings offered to the dedicatee rather than as a strictly philological rendering of the classical text.

As discussed previously, Jiu Ru derives from the Xiao Ya section of the Shijing, traditionally regarded as a body of court hymns from the Western Zhou period.⁴⁴ The Xiao Ya poems are characterized by their ceremonial and ritual function, marked by formality, dignity, restraint, and solemnity.⁴⁵ These qualities shape the interpretive

⁴² Fan-Ling Su, *九如之頌 小提琴獨奏曲最終極版 (Hymn of the Nine Ruyis: The Birthday Song for Violin Solo)* (2019), composer’s score. Access to the score is not publicly available; for acquisition, contact the composer at sufanling@mx.nthu.edu.tw.

⁴³ Patricia Ebrey, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 115.

⁴⁴ Arthur Waley, *The Book of Songs: The Ancient Chinese Classic of Poetry* (New York: Grove Press, 1996), xiii–xv.

⁴⁵ Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), 58–60.

framework of the present composition. Accordingly, the performance should embody a sense of structure, measured control, and elevated expression, in keeping with the courtly ethos embedded in its historical source.

In the poem Tian Bao, the repeated use of the character Ru, meaning “like” or “as,” forms a sequence of nine similes that later came to be referred to as Jiu Ru, functioning as a ritualized blessing.⁴⁶ Through layered natural imagery such as mountains, rivers, the sun, the moon, and evergreen trees, the text conveys wishes for stability, longevity, and cosmic harmony. In its original context, the passage likely served as a ceremonial hymn affirming the endurance and prosperity of the ruling authority.⁴⁷

In the context of the present work, however, Jiu Ru may be interpreted symbolically as nine blessings offered to the composer’s mentor and dedicatee, Professor Hwang Long Pan.

如山如阜，如岡如陵，
如川之方至，如月之恆，
如日之升，如南山之壽，
如松柏之茂。⁴⁸

Like a mountain, like a great mound, like a ridge, like a lofty hill,

Like a river in full flow, like the constancy of the moon,

Like the rising sun, like the longevity of the Southern Mountain,

Like the flourishing pine and cypress.

⁴⁶ Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature*, 60.

⁴⁷ Bernhard Karlgren, *The Book of Odes* (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1950), 104–106.

⁴⁸ *Shijing*, “Xiao Ya,” “Tian Bao,” lines 1–8.

We can categorize these into Category 1: Stability and Foundation, Category 2: Expansion and Cosmic Order and Category 3: Longevity and Fortitude. There are nine main materials and figures that are being used and circulate throughout this piece, this performance guide will focus on the specific philosophical idea that was embodied in each figure.

Analysis and Performance Interpretation of Musical Elements

As previously mentioned, the entire piece was composed using many different figures as its structural foundation. To fully understand the logic and the purpose of this composition, a thorough understanding of the figures is required. In the following section, the writer links musical excerpts with the specific figures, providing explicit performance practice instructions to help the reader understand the meaning of each excerpt. Please note that the fingerings shown in the musical excerpts are from the composer.

Category 1: Stability and Foundation

Like a mountain, like a great mound, like a ridge, like a lofty hill

In this category, musical characteristics include:

- Weight and groundedness
- Technical simplicity
- Even pulse and rhythmic structural stability

Category 2: Expansion and Cosmic Order

Like a river in full flow, like the constancy of the moon, like the rising sun

In this category, musical characteristics include:

- Directional motion
- Momentum
- Gradual build or unfolding

Category 3: Longevity and Fortitude

Like the longevity of the Southern Mountain, like the flourishing pine and cypress.

In this category, musical characteristics include:

- Sustained tone
- Controlled dynamic
- Persistence rather than expansion

Please note that while certain passages present traits associated with more than one category from above, the analytical classification in this research is based on the dominant expressive function of each passage.

Category 1: Stability and Foundation

The first figure (Figure 2.1), appearing in measure 1, begins with open string followed by a long harmonic with a fermata. The simplicity of tone quality, rhythmic structure, and execution establishes stability as the dominant expressive characteristic. The absence of ornamental motion and the sustained resonance reinforce a sense of structural grounding. To convey this stability effectively, precise subdivision and a controlled, metronomic sense of pulse are essential.

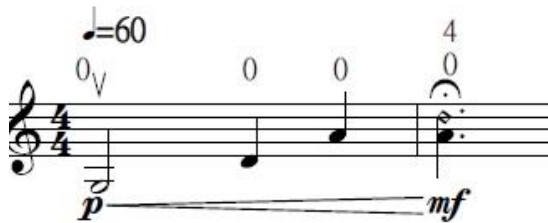


Figure 2.1: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, m. 1

The second figure (Figure 2.2), appearing in measure 5 is relatively transitional, consisting of a passage of artificial harmonics set within a simple rhythmic framework, free of syncopation or dramatic rhythmic changes. The reserved rhythmic character and clarity of the harmonics reinforce a sense of grounded stability. The performer should maintain controlled energy and allow the intervals to shape naturally.

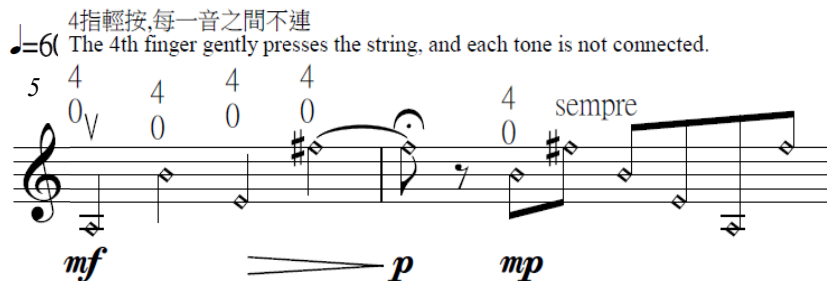


Figure 2.2: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, mm. 5-6

Category 2: Expansion and Cosmic Order

All the figures with a clear direction on expression or register direction, constant moving notes or increasing textural density will be categorized under “Expansion and Cosmic Order.”

The first figure of this category (Figure 2.3) starts in measure 7. This passage serves as a clear example of “Expansion,” as the constant string-crossing sixteenths move upward in register, accompanied by increasing tension generated through the crescendo. Performers should strive to bring out the contrast and shape of the phrase while refraining from overemphasizing the technical demands of the passage. The performer is advised to play these arpeggios as concert pitches, using a light, harmonic-like left-hand pressure while sliding upward.

7 rit. - - $\text{♩} = 48$
手指輕按4弦，由慢到快，漸漸地滑音上去
Fingers tap 4 strings, from slow to fast, slides up.
p p

Figure 2.3: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, m. 7-8

The next figure (Figure 2.4) begins in measure 14. The “Cosmic Order” represents the constancy of the moon, the rising sun, and the river in full flow. Su portrays this through predictable cycles as well as directional and accent patterns. The performer should ensure that the dynamic indications are carefully followed for clear direction and the accented notes, while short and concise, are clearly articulated.

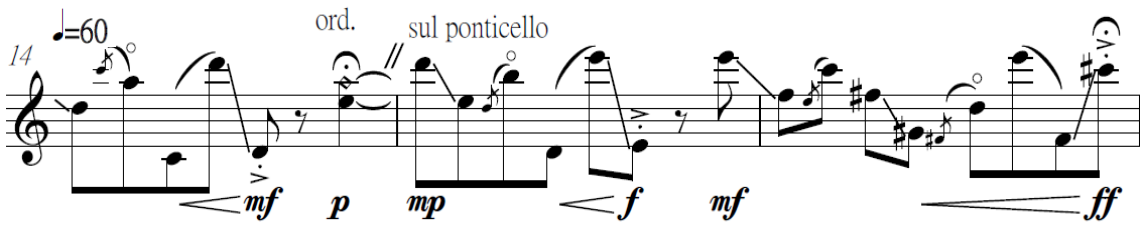


Figure 2.4: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, mm. 14-16

Despite the fermata at the end of the phrase, this next figure (Figure 2.5) from measure 18 does not present longevity quality of the category 3. It is active and pressing forward to an accented stronger expression. This represents accumulating tension and, more importantly, momentum.



Figure 2.5: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, m. 18

Su represents clear directional development, as seen in Figures 2.6 and 2.7, with a rhythmic acceleration. With alternating musical pulse in eighth notes, triplets, sixteenths, and quintuplets, the passages eventually settle with a ritardando. Notice that the leap at the beginning of Figure 2.6 is followed by a descending musical gesture that lands in the lowest register of the violin. Likewise, in the triplets beginning in m. 56 of Figure 2.7, there is a gradual upward shift in register with every two beats. These qualities represent a clear sense of directional movement and vitality; therefore, the performer could focus on the shape and how the contour leads to an arrival in these sections.



Figure 2.6: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, mm. 50-51



Figure 2.7: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, mm. 55-63

Although Figure 2.8 does not present as complicated a rhythmic subdivision as the two previous examples, the change from thirty-second notes to eighth notes and quarter notes with accents suggests expansion and broadening. This is followed by a series of harmonics on the D string and a decrescendo into pianissimo. These elements

could indicate that the performer should allow the music to unfold with a sense of anti-gravity freedom.

The musical score for Violin (Vln.) spans measures 31 to 36. It begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 60. Measure 31 starts with a dynamic of *mf* and includes the instruction 'ord.'. Measure 32 features a dynamic of *mp* and the instruction '分弓 Split bow'. Measure 33 has a dynamic of *f*. Measure 34 includes a dynamic of *mp* and the instruction 'poco rit.'. Measure 35 has a dynamic of *pp*. Measure 36 concludes with a dynamic of *sfz*. The score includes various performance markings such as slurs, accents, and dynamic hairpins.

Figure 2.8: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, mm. 31-36

The last figure under this category, Figure 2.9, features double stops consisting of a moving voice and a stable voice. These represent the directions of ascending or descending, suggesting either “taking over” or “yielding.” In performance, the player should clearly differentiate the moving voice from the stable voice, ensuring that the directional line is projected and the stable line is not overpowering. Careful articulation and balanced pressure are essential to maintain clarity between the two voices while preserving the forward momentum of the passage.



Figure 2.9: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, mm. 52-53

Category 3: Longevity and Fortitude

Like the southern mountain, like the pine and cypress, these images represent timelessness and spiritual endurance, akin to plainchant without dramatic development. The only non-transitional figure within this category appears in measures 37 to 38 (Figure 2.10) and later reappears with non-vibrato in measure 78 (Figure 2.11). This section should be performed with relatively peaceful arch-shaped phrasing. The double-stops must be connected with legato sound, avoiding frivolous or overly dramatic phrasing.



Figure 2.10: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, mm. 37-38



Figure 2.11: *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song*, m. 78

When these categorized figures are mapped across the formal trajectory of the piece, a larger structural design becomes apparent. Structurally, when the musical materials are examined through the three analytical categories, a symmetrical pattern emerges: Category 1 – Category 2 – Category 3 – Category 2 – Category 3 – Category 2 – Category 1. This forms an ABCBCBA structure, resembling the shape of a mountain.

This structural arch echoes the Chinese idiom 壽比南山, meaning “longevity as enduring as the Southern Mountain.” It corresponds directly to the symbolic reference of “like the southern mountain” in the Jiu Ru text. In the context of the work’s subtitle, “*The Birthday Song*,” this arch-shaped structure may be understood as a musical embodiment of the blessing of longevity offered to the dedicatee, Professor Hwang-Long Pan.

CHAPTER 3

LION DANCE

Background and Inspiration of the Lion Dance in Taiwanese Culture

*Lion Dance*⁴⁹ is a work written for violin solo and string orchestra. The orchestral instrumentation is explicitly defined, comprising six first violins, five second violins, four violas, three cellos, and two double basses.

To begin, one must distinguish between the Southern Lion Dance and the Hakka Lion Dance, as their historical purposes and cultural meanings differ significantly. Establishing this distinction is essential for an informed interpretation of this composition. For the subsequent analysis and performance guide to be understood within its proper cultural framework, it is necessary to clarify the stylistic and symbolic characteristics unique to the Hakka Lion tradition.

Unlike the more widely recognized Southern Lion Dance traditions, the Hakka Lion Dance emphasizes martial discipline, grounded power, and explosive force.⁵⁰ Rather than prioritizing height, agility, or acrobatic spectacle, the Hakka Lion focuses on strength, attack, and defensive presence. Its movements resemble a warrior preparing to launch or withstand an assault.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Fan-Ling Su, *舞獅 (Lion Dance)* (2025), composer's score. Access to the score is not publicly available; for acquisition, contact the composer at sufanling@mx.nthu.edu.tw.

⁵⁰ Daniel Amos, "Lion Dance," in *Encyclopedia of Chinese Martial Arts*, ed. Stanley Henning (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2010), 240–242.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

Whereas many Southern Lion performances feature elevated steel poles and tall vertical structures,⁵² the Hakka Lion traditionally performs on wooden tables and benches.⁵³ These platforms symbolize conquest and dominance rather than aerial display. The emphasis is not on height for spectacle, but on controlled power within constrained space.

The physical posture of the Hakka Lion further distinguishes it from other Southern styles. Instead of maintaining an upright and expansive stance, the Hakka Lion often remains hunched and low, mimicking a defensive martial position. Historically, Lion Dance functioned in part as a disguised form of civil defensive training.⁵⁴ Within this context, the lion's movements embody discipline, readiness, and contained aggression.

Although contemporary Hakka Lion troupes may incorporate high-difficulty techniques such as aerial flips, 360-degree spins, and stacked-table formations for international festivals and competitions, these are largely modern adaptations.⁵⁵ Traditionally, Hakka Lions remained grounded, performing primarily on low benches and embodying the spirit of defense and controlled strength rather than acrobatic virtuosity.

⁵² Nicole Constable, "Lion Dance and Identity in South China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 52, no. 2 (1993): 304–306.

⁵³ Amos, "Lion Dance," 241.

⁵⁴ Meir Shahaar, *The Shaolin Monastery: History, Religion, and the Chinese Martial Arts* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 179–182.

⁵⁵ Constable, "Lion Dance and Identity," 310.

Analysis and Performance Interpretation of Musical Elements

Sonata Allegro Form:

Introduction mm. 1-23

Exposition mm. 24-52

Development mm. 53-75

Retransition mm. 68-75

Recapitulation mm. 76-127

Coda mm. 128-136

Lion Dance is a hybrid or fusion of Western and Eastern aesthetic concepts.

To clarify the relationship between musical gesture and Hakka Lion Dance movement, several traditional terms are adopted as interpretive analogies. Grounded and harmonically stable passages may be associated with Horse Stance (馬步), which emphasizes structural rootedness and strength. Moments of metric flexibility resemble Empty Stance (虛步), suggesting lightness and preparation. Developmental or exploratory figures correspond to Seeking the Greens (探青), while climactic statements parallel Plucking the Greens (採青), a movement symbolizing conquest and achievement. Brief ornamental gestures may be likened to Head Shaking (搖頭), reflecting expressive

animation. These terms of dance moves and positions function as interpretive tools rather than literal choreographic references.⁵⁶

Horse stance: harmonic stability

Empty stance: metric elasticity

Seeking the Greens: motivic fragmentation

Plucking greens: thematic climax

Head shakes: rhythmic ornamentation

The piece begins with a D major introduction, establishing the primary material of the work, a frequently used accompaniment figure. Figure 3.1, the violin and viola parts feature a dotted rhythm followed by staccato notes, with an accent on the fourth beat. This figure represents the step patterns of the Lion Dance, conveying agility and fluidity while maintaining a sense of grounded power. Performers should shape the phrase according to the accented pattern, as it reflects the direction and placement of force in Lion Dance movements. The energy is released from the downbeat, while the eighth rest symbolizes a lifting motion, the accent on the fourth beat represents the landing of the step, completing the gesture with a sense of weight and impact.

⁵⁶ Jwing-Ming Yang, *Chinese Martial Arts Training Manuals: A Historical Survey* (Boston: YMAA Publication Center, 2005), 55–60.

The musical score for 'Lion Dance' (mm. 1-4) is presented in a standard orchestral format. It begins with a tempo marking of 110 and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The score includes parts for Violin solo, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The Violin I and II parts are marked *mf* and feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Viola part is marked *mf pizz.* and features a similar rhythmic pattern. The Violoncello and Double Bass parts are marked *mp pizz.* and feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Figure 3.1: *Lion Dance*, mm. 1-4

The role of drums and percussion instruments in Hakka Lion Dance is to control tempo and direct pacing. Rather than dancing with the rhythm, the percussion commands it. The drum functions as a structural authority, signaling movement changes and shaping the dramatic trajectory of the performance.

Although scored without the percussion instruments, Su treats the cello and bass parts with particular attention to articulation and rhythmic pattern. These lower strings assume a role analogous to the traditional drum, representing distinct characters within each section. For this reason, these figures should be performed with careful rhythmic precision and intentional articulation, ensuring that the pulse remains firm and clearly defined, so that the grounded, commanding character associated with Hakka percussion is preserved throughout the section.

The second significant material (Figure 3.2) in the introduction presents a more linear melodic line, characterized by a horizontal and legato shape in contrast to the previous rhythmic and accented material. A key change from D major to D minor further reinforces this contrast. Although the interval range of this figure is narrower, the phrase structure remains consistent, a two-measure repetition followed by two measures of directional development. The melodic structure also concludes in the same manner, ending on the upwards second scale degree. These compositional techniques create a sense of contrasting character within a unified structural framework. The relationship between the two materials may be understood as analogous to the concept of yin and yang, distinct in character, yet existing within the same shared circle.

Notice how this second material naturally leans toward the third beat of the phrase. Although the third beat is not accented, it emerges with a subtle sense of weight as the notes skip downwards, creating a character that inclines toward the lower note rather than striking it with force. Instead of projecting a sharp, energetic attack, the gesture suggests a controlled and inward motion. Performers must be attentive to this nuance and execute the passage with sensitivity and restraint.

Figure 3.2: *Lion Dance*, mm. 9-12

The entrance of the violin soloist (Figure 3.3) does not mark the beginning of a new structural section. Instead of introducing contrasting thematic material, the soloist takes over the existing introductory gesture, maintaining the established rhythmic character and sustaining the sense of motion and energy already set in place by the ensemble. In this way, the entrance of the solo part does not disrupt the structural flow but instead reinforces the continuity of the musical momentum.

The musical score for measures 13-16 of 'Lion Dance' is written in 2/4 time with a tempo of 110. It consists of six staves. The top staff (Violin I) starts with a *mf* dynamic and features a melodic line with many slurs and accents. The second staff (Violin II) and third staff (Viola) play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes, starting at *mp*. The fourth staff (Cello) and fifth staff (Double Bass) also play eighth-note accompaniment, with the Double Bass starting at *mp* and the Cello at *mp*. The sixth staff (lower bass line) plays a simple bass line, starting at *mp* and marked 'arco'. Dynamics increase to *f* in the final measures of the excerpt.

Figure 3.3: *Lion Dance*, mm. 13-16

Beginning in measure 17, a closing section is introduced (Figure 3.4), culminating in a perfect authentic cadence on the downbeat of measure 20. This section serves multiple purposes: it solidifies the tonal area, introduces the running sixteenth-note figure, and functions as a bridge connecting the introduction to the exposition.

In the context of Hakka Lion Dance, the emphasis is not on speed or virtuosic display, but on endurance, grounded strength, and controlled resistance. For this reason, the performer is advised to maintain a steady pulse leading into the *poco ritardando*, focusing on the power, clarity, and consistency of each moving note rather than allowing the passage to become overly light or rushed.

Figure 3.4: *Lion Dance*, mm. 17-20

The first thematic material in the exposition is then presented as a lyrical melodic line built on the F major pentatonic scale in m. 25. The use of this pentatonic scale reinforces a sense of folk character and cultural grounding, aligning the work with traditional Chinese melodic language. In Figure 3.5, the melody unfolds with periodic structure and clear phrase direction, representing agility and lyricism.

This material is restated an octave higher in measures 33–40 (Figure 3.6), intensifying the musical energy while preserving the original melodic structure. The elevated register brings out brilliance and projection, suggesting an expansion of presence

and taking the energy one step forward. The composer creates contrast through color and intensity using this technique later in the piece as well.

From a performance perspective, the octave repetition should not merely sound louder or more forceful; instead, the performer should emphasize the increased brightness and openness of the upper register while retaining the grounded rhythmic stability established earlier. The melodic line should remain fluid and poised, reflecting the lion's animated yet controlled movement within the ceremonial setting.



Figure 3.5: *Lion Dance*, mm. 25-32



Figure 3.6: *Lion Dance*, mm. 33-40

The second thematic material in the exposition (Figure 3.7) presents a linear melodic line marked legato. Although it appears simpler than the first material in terms of melodic contour, its texture, register, and underlying pulse remain highly similar. Rather than creating a sharply contrasting character, Su chooses to simplify the material while

maintaining a familiar color and timbral quality. This compositional decision preserves structural continuity within the exposition instead of introducing dramatic opposition.

From a performance perspective, the passage is marked *legato* without additional articulation markings such as accents or staccatos. The performer should therefore prioritize the continuity of the melodic line and shape the phrase as a single, connected gesture. Careful attention should be given to pacing and dynamic control, allowing sufficient space to grow toward the high B-flat in measure 49, which functions as a local expressive peak within the phrase.

The image shows a musical score for three staves of music. The first staff begins at measure 41 with a tempo marking of 110 and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The music is marked *legato*. The second staff begins at measure 45 and features a dynamic marking of *f*. The third staff begins at measure 49 and features a dynamic marking of *ff*. The music consists of a single melodic line with various note values and rests, connected by slurs.

Figure 3.7: *Lion Dance*, mm. 41-52

The development begins with a passage (Figure 3.8) that combines the running sixteenth-note figure introduced in the exposition, now passed from the soloist to the first violin and viola parts. This transfer of material expands the texture and shifts the focus from a single melodic line to a more layered ensemble interaction. The composer develops previously established gestures, increasing momentum and intensity within the section.

Figure 3.8: *Lion Dance*, mm. 53-56

This passage (Figure 3.9), following the previous figure, brings back the second main material from the introduction, now presented in G minor. Although the thematic material is familiar, the change of tonal color immediately alters its expressive character. Notice the rhythmic alternation: the half note in measure 60 momentarily suspends the forward motion of the figure before it resumes in the following measure. This interruption creates a sense of ambiguity and uncertainty, even while the material itself remains recognizable. The effect suggests a developing musical idea rather than a simple restatement, generating tension in preparation for the next climax.

In relation to Hakka Lion Dance movement, this passage along with Figure 3.7 may be likened to Seeking the Greens, in which the lion cautiously explores before committing to action. The brief pause and subsequent continuation symbol the lion's investigative hesitation, heightening anticipation before the decisive gesture that follows.

59 $\text{♩} = 110$

Figure 3.9: *Lion Dance*, mm. 59-63

This retransition begins with the G minor rhythmic pattern (Figure 3.10) first introduced in D Major in 4 of the introduction. As an energetic motive, it functions as a connective gesture leading toward the next structural section. Within this retransition, the tonal center shifts from G minor to D minor at measure 70, followed by a series of ascending chromatic steps that reinforce the G minor pivot chord. This harmonic motion prepares the return of the first thematic material in the recapitulation.

From a performance perspective, the character of this passage should evolve gradually, from firmness and clarity to a more exploratory quality, and finally toward a sense of inevitability as the recapitulation approaches. In relation to Hakka Lion Dance

movement, this section may be associated with Seeking the Greens, as it embodies the lion's investigative circling before committing to the decisive return.

The image shows a musical score for measures 68-72 of 'Lion Dance'. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 110. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It features a soloist line (measures 68-72) and an orchestra (measures 68-72). The soloist line starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, E32, F32, G32, A32, B32, C33, D33, E33, F33, G33, A33, B33, C34, D34, E34, F34, G34, A34, B34, C35, D35, E35, F35, G35, A35, B35, C36, D36, E36, F36, G36, A36, B36, C37, D37, E37, F37, G37, A37, B37, C38, D38, E38, F38, G38, A38, B38, C39, D39, E39, F39, G39, A39, B39, C40, D40, E40, F40, G40, A40, B40, C41, D41, E41, F41, G41, A41, B41, C42, D42, E42, F42, G42, A42, B42, C43, D43, E43, F43, G43, A43, B43, C44, D44, E44, F44, G44, A44, B44, C45, D45, E45, F45, G45, A45, B45, C46, D46, E46, F46, G46, A46, B46, C47, D47, E47, F47, G47, A47, B47, C48, D48, E48, F48, G48, A48, B48, C49, D49, E49, F49, G49, A49, B49, C50, D50, E50, F50, G50, A50, B50, C51, D51, E51, F51, G51, A51, B51, C52, D52, E52, F52, G52, A52, B52, C53, D53, E53, F53, G53, A53, B53, C54, D54, E54, F54, G54, A54, B54, C55, D55, E55, F55, G55, A55, B55, C56, D56, E56, F56, G56, A56, B56, C57, D57, E57, F57, G57, A57, B57, C58, D58, E58, F58, G58, A58, B58, C59, D59, E59, F59, G59, A59, B59, C60, D60, E60, F60, G60, A60, B60, C61, D61, E61, F61, G61, A61, B61, C62, D62, E62, F62, G62, A62, B62, C63, D63, E63, F63, G63, A63, B63, C64, D64, E64, F64, G64, A64, B64, C65, D65, E65, F65, G65, A65, B65, C66, D66, E66, F66, G66, A66, B66, C67, D67, E67, F67, G67, A67, B67, C68, D68, E68, F68, G68, A68, B68, C69, D69, E69, F69, G69, A69, B69, C70, D70, E70, F70, G70, A70, B70, C71, D71, E71, F71, G71, A71, B71, C72, D72, E72, F72, G72, A72, B72, C73, D73, E73, F73, G73, A73, B73, C74, D74, E74, F74, G74, A74, B74, C75, D75, E75, F75, G75, A75, B75, C76, D76, E76, F76, G76, A76, B76, C77, D77, E77, F77, G77, A77, B77, C78, D78, E78, F78, G78, A78, B78, C79, D79, E79, F79, G79, A79, B79, C80, D80, E80, F80, G80, A80, B80, C81, D81, E81, F81, G81, A81, B81, C82, D82, E82, F82, G82, A82, B82, C83, D83, E83, F83, G83, A83, B83, C84, D84, E84, F84, G84, A84, B84, C85, D85, E85, F85, G85, A85, B85, C86, D86, E86, F86, G86, A86, B86, C87, D87, E87, F87, G87, A87, B87, C88, D88, E88, F88, G88, A88, B88, C89, D89, E89, F89, G89, A89, B89, C90, D90, E90, F90, G90, A90, B90, C91, D91, E91, F91, G91, A91, B91, C92, D92, E92, F92, G92, A92, B92, C93, D93, E93, F93, G93, A93, B93, C94, D94, E94, F94, G94, A94, B94, C95, D95, E95, F95, G95, A95, B95, C96, D96, E96, F96, G96, A96, B96, C97, D97, E97, F97, G97, A97, B97, C98, D98, E98, F98, G98, A98, B98, C99, D99, E99, F99, G99, A99, B99, C100, D100, E100, F100, G100, A100, B100, C101, D101, E101, F101, G101, A101, B101, C102, D102, E102, F102, G102, A102, B102, C103, D103, E103, F103, G103, A103, B103, C104, D104, E104, F104, G104, A104, B104, C105, D105, E105, F105, G105, A105, B105, C106, D106, E106, F106, G106, A106, B106, C107, D107, E107, F107, G107, A107, B107, C108, D108, E108, F108, G108, A108, B108, C109, D109, E109, F109, G109, A109, B109, C110, D110, E110, F110, G110, A110, B110, C111, D111, E111, F111, G111, A111, B111, C112, D112, E112, F112, G112, A112, B112, C113, D113, E113, F113, G113, A113, B113, C114, D114, E114, F114, G114, A114, B114, 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F162, G162, A162, B162, C163, D163, E163, F163, G163, A163, B163, C164, D164, E164, F164, G164, A164, B164, C165, D165, E165, F165, G165, A165, B165, C166, D166, E166, F166, G166, A166, B166, C167, D167, E167, F167, G167, A167, B167, C168, D168, E168, F168, G168, A168, B168, C169, D169, E169, F169, G169, A169, B169, C170, D170, E170, F170, G170, A170, B170, C171, D171, E171, F171, G171, A171, B171, C172, D172, E172, F172, G172, A172, B172, C173, D173, E173, F173, G173, A173, B173, C174, D174, E174, F174, G174, A174, B174, C175, D175, E175, F175, G175, A175, B175, C176, D176, E176, F176, G176, A176, B176, C177, D177, E177, F177, G177, A177, B177, C178, D178, E178, F178, G178, A178, B178, C179, D179, E179, F179, G179, A179, B179, C180, D180, E180, F180, G180, A180, B180, C181, D181, E181, F181, G181, A181, B181, C182, D182, E182, F182, G182, A182, B182, C183, D183, E183, F183, G183, A183, B183, C184, D184, E184, F184, G184, A184, B184, C185, D185, E185, F185, G185, A185, B185, C186, 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Figure 3.11: *Lion Dance*, mm. 76-79

The transition that was absent in the exposition is now introduced in the recapitulation (Figure 3.12). It draws upon the previously established running sixteenth-note figure, followed by a passage of syncopation (Figure 3.13) that suggests searching and exploratory motion. The running sixteenth-note figure then reappears, driving the music forward and leading into the return of the second thematic material from the exposition, now presented in D minor.

In terms of Hakka Lion Dance movement, this section may be associated with Seeking the Greens, as the syncopated gestures and repeated figures convey investigation and anticipation before reasserting thematic identity in a darker color.

92 $\text{♩} = 110$

Figure 3.12: *Lion Dance*, mm. 92-95

97 $\text{♩} = 110$

Figure 3.13: *Lion Dance*, mm. 97-100

The return of the second thematic material (Figure 3.14) demonstrates the strong compatibility among the various figures introduced earlier in the work. In measure 115, the obligato pattern appears in the soloist's part, while the first violin restates the primary material from the introduction. At the same time, the second thematic material is reiterated in the cello and bass.

This layering of previously established materials creates a sense of structural integration, as earlier motives are no longer presented in isolation but combined within a unified texture. The result is a heightened sense of cohesion and dramatic culmination within the recapitulation.

Figure 3.14: *Lion Dance*, mm. 113-116

The closing section of the piece recalls the primary material from introduction (Figure 3.15), bringing the work full circle. It concludes with a thick orchestral texture at fortississimo (Figure 3.16), culminating in a D major chord that projects a decisive and victorious spirit. The intensified dynamic and reinforced harmonic stability create a sense of finality, affirming the triumphant character established throughout the work. In terms of Hakka Lion Dance movement, this final gesture may be associated with Plucking the Greens, symbolizing achievement, conquest, and celebratory resolution.

The image displays a musical score for measures 12 and 13 of the piece 'Lion Dance'. The score is written in D major (one sharp) and 2/4 time, with a tempo marking of 130. It consists of six staves: three woodwind staves (flute, clarinet, and saxophone), a string quartet (violin I, violin II, viola, and cello/double bass), and a percussion staff. The music is marked with a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic. The notation includes various articulations such as accents, slurs, and breath marks. The piece concludes with a D major chord in the final measure.

Figure 3.15: *Lion Dance*, m. 128

135

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Lion Dance' from measures 135 to 136. The score is written for a string quartet, consisting of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/8. The music begins at measure 135 with a dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo). The first three staves (Violin I, Violin II, and Viola) feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The Cello/Double Bass part has a simpler accompaniment. At measure 136, the dynamic marking changes to *fff* (fortississimo). The first three staves have a 'non div.' (non-diviso) marking above the notes, indicating that the notes should be held together. The Cello/Double Bass part also has a 'ten.' (tension) marking above the notes. The score ends with a double bar line at the end of measure 136.

Figure 3.16: *Lion Dance*, mm. 135-136

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

This study has sought to construct a performance guide grounded not only in structural and musical analysis, but also in cultural and philosophical context. By examining *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis – The Birthday Song* through the lens of Eastern philosophical symbolism and interpreting *Lion Dance* as a work that synthesizes both Hakka Lion Dance movement and Western aesthetic perspectives, this research demonstrates that musical meaning extends beyond notation and into cultural identity, ritual practice, and historical continuity.

Philosophical concepts such as balance, endurance, cyclical return, and complementary opposition play a central role in shaping the interpretive framework of this study. These ideas are not exclusive to Eastern culture and may also be found in various Western musical traditions. Understanding these perspectives allows performers to move beyond technical execution and toward culturally informed interpretation.

Similarly, recognizing the relationship between music and Lion Dance movement deepens both analysis and performance. The rhythmic authority, the grounded martial stance, the exploratory gestures, and the climactic act of the dance moves provide a physical vocabulary through which musical passages may be understood and embodied. By connecting the musical language of the score with the kinetic language of dance, the performer gains a more authentic and informed approach to shaping phrasing, articulation, and dramatic interpretation.

Finally, this document affirms the importance of promoting contemporary Taiwanese composers, particularly female voices such as Fan-Ling Su, whose works synthesize cultural heritage with modern compositional language. As a performer sharing a similar cultural background, engaging with this repertoire carries both artistic and cultural responsibility.

Through research, performance, and scholarly interpretation, this study contributes to the visibility of Taiwanese violin literature and supports the continued recognition of composers whose identities and traditions enrich the global contemporary music landscape.

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APPENDIX A

PERMISSION TO USE MUSICAL SCORES BY FAN-LING SU



Hsiang-Jen Yang <hyang176@asu.edu>

關於博士論文研究使用樂譜之同意

sufanling 蘇凡凌 <sufanling@mx.nthu.edu.tw>
To: Hsiang-Jen Yang <hyang176@asu.edu>

Wed, Oct 29, 2025 at 1:54 AM

Dear 翔任：

下令回答你的提問：

一、蘇老師您是否同意我在博士研究中使用您的作品《九如之頌》與《舞獅》的樂譜內容？此使用僅限於學術研究用途，並且在我的博士論文中僅會呈現部分樂譜片段作為分析之用，不作任何商業使用。

同意！

二、請問這兩首作品是否有其他委託者（commissioner）？若有的話，我是否也需要取得他們的同意來使用樂譜？
《九如之頌》是為我的教授潘皇龍生日音樂會而作，我同意即可。
《舞獅》是客家委員會委託創作的作品，但是不須經過他們的同意！

最後想請問，在我完成研究後，若有讀者想了解或取得這兩首作品的樂譜，是否有正式的管道可以取得（例如您的個人網站或出版資訊）？

這2首沒有出版過，也沒有放在網站上。如有要取得樂譜，要徵詢我的同意。

以上

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Hsiang-Jen Yang 於 2025-10-29 11:28 寫到:

[Quoted text hidden]

Summary of permission statement (translated by the author):

The composer grants permission for the use of excerpts from *Hymn of the Nine Ruyis* and *Lion Dance* in this research paper. This usage is limited to academic purposes and includes only partial score excerpts for analytical discussion, with no commercial use.