

Yu-Hong Hong

蓮吟 · λωτοφάγοι

The Chant of the Lotus

for Mixed Ensemble of Chinese and Western Instruments

(2023)

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National Culture and Arts Foundation

Program Note

此曲概念取自詩人丁尼生以古希臘史詩《奧德賽》為基礎，創作的作品 *Lotos-Eaters*。

詩文描述奧德修斯征戰過程中，船隊意外偏離航道途經食蓮島，幾個被派去探索食蓮島的軍人，因為吃了能忘卻時間與憂慮的蓮花，而失去了要返回船上繼續征戰的念頭。作曲者以不同的聲響姿態呈現詩中描繪的五個食蓮島景色（海浪波湧至彼岸嗡嗡，夕陽下的島·昏醉的空氣，沾滿雨水蒼鬱的老松，懸涯溪水光影飛濺，山谷·在半空懸垂），並以五個景色片段的循環，營造島上時間停滯的特徵。

此曲試圖在各個層面上尋求中西混合的意義與各種可能的思考方向。在樂器方面，以被視為東方齊特琴的古箏，來借代類似於齊特琴的古希臘八弦琴，以單支笙苗借代骨笛或是蘆葦管等古代的樂器；音高素材上引用現存最早的曲譜古希臘《塞基洛斯的墓誌銘》和古箏傳統曲目《出水蓮》，將古希臘的時代氛圍感與東方描寫蓮花的曲態做結合；曲中的耳語（whisper）素材，取用自描述社會底層被統治者壓迫致無家可歸的詩經《式微》，與丁尼生 *Lotos-Eaters* 最後的文本內容 “We will return no more, Our island home Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam” 相互對應，傳達此故事中隱含的追求自由與反戰的哲學思維。

The concept of this piece derives from the poet Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) and his poem "Lotos-Eaters," based on the ancient Greek epic "Odyssey." The poem narrates Odysseus' journey during warfare when the fleet accidentally deviated from its route and encountered Lotus Island. Several soldiers who were sent to explore the island lost the desire to return to the ship and continue the war since they ate the lotus that rendered time and concerns forgetful. The composer portrays the five scenes of the Lotus Island described in the poem (The gushing of the wave · The music in ears, Always afternoon · The languid air did swoon, Showery drops · Up-climb the pine, Cliff · Stream · Lights and shadows broke, Valley · Fall and pause) through different sonic gestures, creating the characteristic of time stagnation on the island.

The composition seeks a blend of Eastern and Western instruments on various levels, bringing forth meanings and various potential avenues of contemplation. In terms of instruments, the zheng, which is known as the Eastern zither, is used to represent the ancient Greek eight-stringed lyre. Furthermore, a single sheng reed pipe is used to symbolize ancient instruments, like bone flutes. The pitch material incorporates references to the ancient Greek, "Seikilos Epitaph," and traditional zheng piece "Emerging Lotus," and combines the atmosphere of ancient Greece with melodies that depict lotus in the Eastern tradition. The whispering material in the work is drawn from the descriptions of social oppression and homelessness in the Chinese poem "Shi Wei," aligning with Tennyson's final text in "Lotos-Eaters": "We will return no more, Our island home Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam." This interplay conveys the underlying philosophical ideas of pursuing freedom and anti-war sentiments within the narrative.

Performance Note

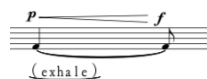
General

—————▶ Continuous and even transition from one sound state on the next.

Voice



(inhale)



Touch the palate with tongue, then exhale.



邶風·式微

式微，式微，胡不歸？
微君之躬，胡為乎泥中。
式微，式微，胡不歸？
微君之躬，胡為乎泥中。



Toilers

It's near dusk, Why not home go?
It is for you, We're wet with dew.
It's near dusk, Why not home go?
For you, O Sire, We toil in mire.

(許淵沖譯)



Tremolo with tongue



Tremolo with breath



Tremolo with finger



Inhale through the instrument without pressing any holes and keys



Exhale through the instrument without pressing any holes and keys



Sing any pitch and play.

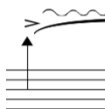
Bass Clarinet



Air only.



half air and half tone.



Squeeze, a high pitch produced by squeezing the teeth on the reed.
Squeezing tighter causes a higher pitch.



Tremolo on key clicks.



Sing any pitch and play.

Strings

*Accessories: 1. Plastic bottle (Fill water at different levels to create different pitches)
2. superball (only for cello)

sp sul ponticello.

m.sp molto sul ponticello.

st sul tasto.


ord ordinary.

m.v. molto vibrato.

1/2 col legno. Bowing with 1/2 wood of the bow and 1/2 hair of the bow.

Jeté Bounce the bow on the string.

 ordinary pressure.

 over pressure.



Circular bowing.

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♩=70

海浪浪湧至彼岸喻喻 I
The gushing of the wave · The music in ears I

The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for 37-Reed Sheng, Bass Clarinet in Bb, Zheng (with treble and bass staves), Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The second system includes parts for Sheng, B. Cl., Zheng, Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. The score features a variety of musical notations such as dynamics (f, mp, mf, pp), articulation (slap, pizz, arco), and performance techniques (gliss., sp, m.v., sul. D, msp, t). There are also specific markings for the Sheng instrument, including [shue-shu] and a box marked with an asterisk (*).

* The box should be opened