THE RISE OF THE CHINESE CONCERTO: A LOOK INTO THE DEVELOPMENTS OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL INSTRUMENT CONCERTI WITH WESTERN ORCHESTRA

by

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ABSTRACT

The mixing of musical traditions between cultures, philosophies, and religions has been a crucial element of music for centuries. However, a stark rise over the last century has seen rapid development of specific East/West fusions that have become known as “fusion concertos.” These fusions combine Eastern and Western compositional techniques as well as Eastern and Western instruments to create new and interesting works for a multitude of ensembles.

This research takes two early examples written by Chinese composers, the world-famous works *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, and analyzes them regarding form, melodic content, harmonic content, and instrumental considerations. This analysis is then compared to three newer works written by well-known composers Ma Shui-long, Tan Dun, and Bright Sheng. Through this process, key factors will be identified that highlight the fusions between Eastern and Western ideas. Detailed analysis of these traits sheds light on what makes these compositional hybrids successful regarding the compositional traits listed above, as well as explores important cultural factors that shape the work’s narrative.

It is my hope through this research that more scholars, researchers, and performers become aware of the fundamental techniques that make these works successful and endeavor to continue advancing this exciting and influential genre to a continually wider audience.