

The Exploration of Chinese Music in the GIM Music Program 'Harvest'

Wai Man Ng, FAMI

Hong Kong Registered Music Therapist

AMI Member

Introduction

Music programs are a crucial element in GIM. Helen Bonny and other GIM therapists have created many GIM music programs. Most program designers belong to the Western culture, have classical music training and mostly use classical music in their GIM music programs. However, now that GIM is spreading to Asian countries, including China, cultural differences imply that Western classical music might not be the best choice for Chinese people. Therefore, Chinese elements need to be included in a GIM music program. I am very proud to be the first Chinese GIM therapist with Chinese music training and background; in the following paragraphs I share my experience of creating "Harvest", the first Chinese GIM music program.

The Four-Step Process of Creating the Program A. Selection of appropriate Chinese Musical Style Many modern Chinese people do not readily accept traditional Chinese music because they tend to feel 'It is not relevant to my generation; it belongs with past history'. Yu (2001) states that Hong Kong Chinese mostly like the symphonic Chinese orchestra (contemporary Chinese orchestra), which probably was influenced by British colonialism and culture. In order to accommodate the preferences of contemporary Chinese people, the music selections in "Harvest" are played by a combination orchestra that includes Chinese and Western instruments, Western orchestration, Chinese melody and Western harmony.

B. Listening and Selection

Initially I listened to over 50 pieces of music played by the contemporary Chinese orchestra, focusing on melody, harmony, orchestration, contour, and musical style. I then selected ten pieces of music and listened again, focusing on emotional contrasts in the music, finally choosing six potentially suitable pieces.

C. Arrangement and First Trial

A colleague was invited to try the first version of "Harvest". Initially, her imagery and

feelings were acceptable and enjoyable. However, when the music ended, she said she did not want to stop the musical journey because her imagery felt incomplete. This was because the bright Piano Concerto “Yellow River” concluded the program and had the potential to elicit another issue. Without further music, resolution was not possible.

D. Rearrangement and Second Trial

The Piano Concerto was deleted from the program for the second trial. However, how to bring the client to a completion? It is very important. I divided the violin concerto into two parts and used these at the beginning and ending of the program. The final version of “Harvest” was established as given here.

“Harvest”

Duration 31:05

1. Violin Concerto: “The Tragedy of Laing Shanbo and Zhu Yintai (beginning) 5:01
2. Guanzi Concerto: “Fantasia of the Silk Road” 3rd Movement: “A Verse of the Ancient Path” 6:38
3. Musical Poem: “Dreaming of Bathing in Huaqing Pool” 3rd Scene. 9:29
4. “The Red Detachment of Women”: “The Drill of the Red Detachment of Women” 3:34
5. Musical Poem: “Thoughts on the Silk Road” 3rd Movement, “Love Song” 2:56
6. Violin Concerto: “The Tragedy of Laing Shanbo and Zhu Yintai” (ending) 3:25

The same colleague was invited to trial this final version. She found she could finish her imagery naturally. Six participants agreed to take a GIM session with the program; two piano teachers, two Chinese instrument players, and two nonmusicians.

Findings from “Harvest” Experiences

The participants enjoyed the program. Although their issues were different, they created very similar experiences and feelings in their imagery, shown below in Table 1.

Music	Piano Teacher	Chinese Musician	Non-Musician
1. Violin Concerto	River	Sea & Lake	Boat
2. Guanzi Concerto (See Appendix)	Slow Dancing & Walking Praying & Sleeping No Money	Slow Walking Rest Useless	Walking Upward No Help & No Plant
3. Dreaming of Bathing in Huaqing	(Different Journey) Many People	(Different Journey) Many Friends	(Different Journey) Firework

Pool (See Appendix)	Quick & Anxious	Difficult	Afraid & Quick
4. The Red Detachment of Women	Bad Guys Brave & Anxious Hope	Witch Fast New Situation	Man Happy See Far Away
5. Love Song	Bad Situation Quiet	Difficult Small Path	Afraid Helpless
6. Violin Concerto	At Home Very Full	Secure Enjoyable & Wonderful	Support Back Home

Participants' imagery showed no significant differences between the piano teachers, Chinese music players and non-musicians. After their process participants were invited to share their feelings and thoughts relating to the music itself, thus providing some useful information for further application of "Harvest".

Piano Teacher 1: When I hear *The Red Detachment of Women*, I strongly feel the Cultural Revolution in China. Fortunately, I did not experience the revolution; others, such as my parents, absolutely hate this music because of its associations.

Piano Teacher 2: This music program is similar to the previous classical program. (One of the other GIM programs.) I enjoy it, but the percussion is very strong. If the volume can be reduced it will be perfect.

Chinese Musician 1: I can recognize some melodies. I feel very familiar with and close to this music.

Chinese Musician 2: I feel the music that belongs to me and to my culture.

Non-Musician 1: It is wonderful. I enjoy the music.

Non-Musician 2: I really focused on the imagery rather than the music. So, no music is recognizable.

The piano teachers strongly focused on the historical background of the music and the sound quality. This may be because of their teaching focus and habits.

The Chinese musicians felt that the music belonged to them and this relates to their Chinese musical background and interests.

The non-musicians made no comment on the music. Because of a presumed lack of musical knowledge they were able to enjoy their music and imagery without any intellectual analysis.

Conclusion

According to feedback from participants, a series of emotions was experienced throughout “Harvest”. These included: “peaceful, empty, anxious, difficult, afraid, hopeful, quiet, secure, and back home”. I feel “Harvest” might be suitable for clients who, desiring a different perspective, want to recapitulate a session series and then summarize what they have gained from a certain period of life. Although different emotions than in the session series might be evoked, the main significance is in the experience and quality of the client’s journey, including imagery, feelings, insights, and the impact of all these on their inner self and future life. Whether the imagery encompasses good or bad, happy or sad, success or failure, participants will have achieved their own harvest, which potentially is an important resource in their lives.

Personally, “Harvest” represents my journey of learning GIM. Throughout these few years, whatever has occurred, I already have gained my own ‘harvest’ from the journey; this is very precious in my life.

References

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Appendix

1: Guanzi is a Chinese double reed wind instrument; a 'bamboo instrument' in the ancient Chinese instrument classification system. The sound of Guanzi is slightly similar to clarinet and saxophone.

2: Huaqing Pool is located in the Lintong District 30 km east of the urban area of Xian. It has a history of 6000 years for the use of hot springs and a history of 3000 years of royal gardens.