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**TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS AND TRANSFORMATION IN
PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF THE GUZHENG
CONCERTO *NIGHT MOORING AT MAPLE BRIDGE***

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Abstract:

Night Mooring at Maple Bridge is a guzheng concerto that fuses traditional Chinese elements into a modern composition. The work, based on classical poetry, folk idioms and operatic traditions, reshapes traditional resources in modern Chinese instrumental music. This study examines the work in two complementary sections: structural and compositional analysis on the basis of the piano reduction score and performance interpretation. The compositional dimension is analysed using score-based study of elements borrowed from Kunqu opera, Jiangnan sizhu, southern Jiangsu folk song styles, and classical poetic imagery and how these affect melodic, tonal and structural design. These elements are transformed rather than directly quoted, forming a modern musical idiom. The performance aspect investigates the achievement of these transformed elements. Through score analysis and performance-based listening, articulation, tempo, and techniques such as glissando, scraping, and tremolo reveal how interpretation shapes poetic atmosphere and expression. The results indicate that traditional components in *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge* do not only perform at the compositional design level but also reconfigure further by embodied performance. The connection between structural analysis and performance interpretation makes the proposed study add to the body of performance-informed studies on modern guzheng repertoire and provides insights that others can apply to Chinese instrumental performance and pedagogy.

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Keyword:

Contemporary Chinese Instrumental Music, Guzheng Performance, Traditional Elements, Transformation.



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Introduction

Composer Background

Wang Jianmin is a renowned Chinese composer from Wuxi, Jiangsu Province. His musical compositions span multiple genres, including symphonic works, chamber music, and pieces for traditional Chinese instruments, his works for traditional instruments primarily focus on the erhu and the guzheng, and he has released multiple solo albums (Wang & Li, 2021). His works are characterised by a strong national stylistic orientation and have contributed to the contemporary development of Chinese traditional instrumental music.

While incorporating modern compositional techniques with diverse Western musical elements, Wang Jianmin also promotes traditional Chinese music and culture within his works (Huan & Maneewattana, 2024). For example, various Chinese traditional elements, such as ancient Chinese poetry, folk music and opera, and historical figures, have been incorporated into his musical works. His compositions feature both familiar and catchy traditional themes and melodies, as well as innovative dramatic developments. His works have gained great popularity among performers due to the rich harmonic colours and the innovative performance techniques.

Background of the Composition

Night Mooring at Maple Bridge is one of Wang Jianmin's signature works, a concerto for guzheng and piano inspired by the ancient poem of the same name by the poet Zhang Ji (Wang, 2015). The composition composes the scenes depicted in the poem with such vividness that it immerses both the listeners and the performers in the atmosphere depicted.

This composition demonstrates characteristics of programmatic music. In the instrumental composition, program music can be defined as a type of music with descriptive titles or extramusical references to produce a particular imagery or narrative (Hepokoski, 2014). Such works in guzheng music are frequently inspired by poetry, references to historical events, phenomena in nature, etc., and used as titles of descriptive pieces in guzheng.

The guzheng concerto by the composer Wang Jianmin is a synthesis of the ancient poetic background of the *Night Mooring in Maple Bridge*, and the music itself incorporates the Kunqu opera and classical poetry in its own musical language. This makes the concerto rich with content and unique style. The poetic elements evoke the melancholy beauty and profound loneliness of the Jiangnan nightscape as perceived by a traveller in a foreign land. They further express the poet's frustration at being unrecognised for his talents, bitterness over displacement, and yearning for peace and stability in times of turmoil (Li, 2021).

The composer changed the traditional pentatonic tuning of the guzheng and, through modification of the string sequence, expressed his own artistic expression and understanding of his thoughts on art. With meticulous refinement, he crafted his guzheng concerto.

Problem Statement

As a traditional Chinese instrument, the guzheng has continuously expanded its expressive range within the broader process of musical modernisation (Chen & Li, 2023). The guzheng concerto *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, inspired by the poetic imagery of Zhang Ji's Tang dynasty poem, integrates traditional Chinese musical elements within a contemporary concerto framework. Through this integration, the work reconfigures traditional materials at the levels of musical language, structure, and performance technique, making it a significant case for scholarly investigation.

However, existing research has primarily focused on aspects such as genre and history. Scholars have analyzed Kunqu musical modes to reveal the internal organizational structures of Kunqu's melodic frameworks and vocal logic (Lau, 2023), while Gil-Curiel (2023) further demonstrated that traditional Chinese musical materials are not statically preserved in modern Chinese music but are continuously transformed and reinterpreted through processes of modernity, mediatization, and recontextualization. While the aforementioned studies provide an important theoretical foundation for this paper, they have not yet undertaken research that combines score-based analysis with performance analysis specifically focused on a contemporary guzheng concerto.

Moreover, regarding performance practice, scholars have primarily focused their discussions on performance science or case studies of Western works. Green (2020) explicitly criticized the absence of the performer's voice in these studies, while Rink (2023) further proposed that the performer's perspective should be an integral part of performance preparation. Williamon et al. (2021) provided a systematic methodological foundation for performance-based research, however, these studies did not address contemporary Chinese instrumental music, nor did they offer a directly applicable analytical framework for the interplay between the compositional organization of traditional elements and the performative realization of traditional elements in guzheng concertos.

To fill these gaps, this study discusses *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge* in two aspects that are complementary to each other: the metamorphosis of traditional elements in the compositional structure in the piano reduction score and the realisation of the same elements in the performance practice.

Literature Review

The study of the guzheng has traditionally focused on the historical process of the instrument and its evolving connection with tradition and modernity. Within contemporary composition and performance, scholars have noted that guzheng music increasingly reflects a synthesis of national stylistic identity and multicultural influences, particularly in the expansion of large-scale forms such as ensemble works and concerto repertoire (Du & Wang, 2024; Huang & Huang, 2025). Through these studies, it is also noted that the traditional music elements are always reinterpreted in the contemporary musical compositional contexts, hence encouraging the diversification of the musical language of the guzheng.

The literature on the integration of traditional Chinese components in guzheng concertos has mainly discussed three issues, namely the nationalisation of musical language (Huang, 2024), poetic and cultural imagery expression (Li, 2021), and performance method succession and innovation (Chen & Li, 2023). Although these studies provide useful insights into stylistic features, they remain largely descriptive and offer limited explanation of how interpretative decisions emerge in performance.

Specific research on the guzheng concerto *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge* has largely concentrated on its artistic characteristics and technical features. The melodic structure and tonality of the work have been discussed by academics, and it has to be mentioned that thematic development was achieved in a stratified manner and aligned with a vividly Chinese aesthetic orientation (Pearce, 2005). The relationship between traditional Chinese components and western composition formulas, especially the concerto and the application of the piano as a collaborative tool, has been discussed by other researchers (Zhang, 2021; Zhang, 2023). In terms of performance, the expressive possibilities of guzheng methods and how they can be used to provide the recitative qualities and aesthetic depth have been explored in research (Wang, 2025), and practical insights on the nature of interpretative practice have been put forward by performer-informed reflection (Blom & Poole, 2004).

Other studies in the field of music performance research have presented digital instruments and visualisation in the past few years as means to study the processes of performance (Yang & Huang, 2016; Yang, 2017; Cancino et al., 2018). Despite these methodological opportunities, their use in the performance of the guzheng concerto is little and has yet to result in a coherent interpretative framework that incorporates the compositional structure with the performance practice.

Altogether, the literature review has provided a ground of knowledge about the compositional background and technical peculiarities of *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*. However, there remains a lack of studies that systematically integrate score-based structural analysis with performance-informed interpretation. This study therefore addresses this gap by examining how traditional Chinese musical elements are organised within the compositional structure and further realised through performance interpretation. By linking structural and performance-informed perspectives, the study proposes a more integrated analytical approach to contemporary guzheng concerto research.

Research Methods

This study adopts an interpretive and analytical approach, based on attentive listening, score-based analysis, and the examination of compositional and stylistic elements in context. Based on the need to establish the cultural and theoretical background of the work, the research commences with a critical review of the available scholarly literature on guzheng music, traditional elements of Chinese music, and concerto repertoire. This approach is informed by performer-centred analytical perspectives, which emphasise the relationship between structural analysis and performance interpretation (Rink, 2023; Green, 2020).

Instead of focusing on technological measurement or quantitative data, the study is concerned with the ways in which traditional elements of Chinese music are structured at the level of composition and realised through performance interpretation. The study discusses musical structure, tonal organisation, rhythmic design, and performance techniques as interrelated

In addition, the temporary modulations required by the melodic progression cannot be achieved solely through left-hand pitch alteration. Instead, the performer must execute two temporary adjustments to the bridge during performance in order to fulfil the modulation requirements, as illustrated in Figure 2.



Figure 2: *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, bar 98.

Source: Wang Jianmin, *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, Wang Jianmin guzheng works collection.

Analysis of the Composition's Structure

The work is organised into three principal stages framed by an introduction and a coda and may be divided into three main sections: a slow-tempo thematic section, a middle section comprising Andante and Allegretto, and a recapitulation of the slow-tempo theme.

The introduction is serene and expansive, drawing inspiration from the Kunqu (昆曲, traditional Chinese opera) technique of *jinda manchang* (紧打慢唱, “fast tempo with slow singing”). The slow section employs a seven-note classical mode with added altered pitches and is characterised by a relatively free and relaxed rhythmic organisation. This is followed by an expressive, song-like Andante section in which tempo flexibility and emotional intensity gradually increase. As the music increases in pace, it takes an affective path, up and down, gradually intensifying the thematic material. The slowly moving theme returns and brings us to the coda, which evokes a sense of stillness and closure.

The beginning and ending of the work, as well as the transitions between sections, are articulated through relatively free, unmeasured passages. Notably, two cadenzas function as structural bridges linking the principal sections, with melodic material alternating between melancholy and impassioned character. Table 1 summarises the formal structure of the work.

Table 1: Form Structure of *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*

Section	Bars
Introduction	1–8
Slow-tempo theme	9–35
Transition	36–37
Andante–Allegretto	38–82
Cadenza	83–93
Recapitulation	94–118
Coda	119–128

Source: Wang Jianmin, *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, Wang Jianmin Guzheng Works Collection.

Traditional Elements and Their Transformation

The composition maintains the melodic characteristics and the tonal orientation of the Chinese folk music but has integrated the classical Chinese poetry in its musical language. By means

of this integration, traditional Chinese elements are used to help create a coherent and evocative artistic conception in the entire work.

Table 2: Transformation of Traditional Elements in *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*

Traditional Source	Compositional Transformation	Performance Realisation
Kunqu opera	Motivic adaptation and contour restructuring	Flexible tempo, vocal-like phrasing
Jiangnan sizhu	Timbral simulation and textural layering	Tone control and instrumental imitation
Sunan folk song	Melodic shaping and phrase-based development	Dynamic shaping and expressive timing
Classical poetry	Structural pacing and atmosphere construction	Rubato and expressive timing

Source: Analytical summary by the author based on score analysis and performance observation.

The analytical framework of this paper is created in table 2 by positioning the processes of transforming traditional elements of Chinese music into their original culture source and further implementing them in performance. Instead of considering such elements as fixed quotations, the table shows how they are reorganised at the pitch organisation, texture and formal design level and rearticulated by interpretative choices like timing, articulation and timbral control. Thus, it makes clear the active connection between the compositional construction and performative realisation and offers a conceptual framework to the integrated analysis provided in the other sections.

Application of Kunqu (昆曲) Musical Elements

Kunqu, when classified according to modal systems, may be broadly divided into *Nanqu* (南曲, Southern opera) and *Beiqu* (北曲, Northern opera) traditions (Lau, 2023). *Nanqu* typically employs pentatonic scales that omit scale degrees “4” and “7,” whereas *Beiqu* melodies are heptatonic and frequently incorporate these pitches. On this basis, *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge* may be associated more closely with the musical style of *Beiqu*.

The composer does not directly quote *Beiqu* melodies but adapts typical Kunqu melodic materials by using widely used motivic patterns. Kunqu influence is evident in the frequent use of descending stepwise motion, as well as in characteristic melodic motifs such as “1–7–6” and “1–2–7–6.” These motifs are carried out in various forms throughout the guzheng composition. Figure 3 is the earliest example of this motivic prototype, where the motif is used in phrases and phrase endings that follow a pattern similar to that found in *Beiqu* melodies, and the composer expands the “1–2–7–6” motif by incorporating scale degree “5.” This effect on the melodic contour emphasises the characteristic timbral qualities of the guzheng and reduces the forwardness most often attributed to the northern Kunqu melodies. Meanwhile, it also adds a more flowing and lingering, which reminds southern Kunqu traditions, which brings the music closer to the soft tradition of Jiangnan.



Figure 3: *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, bars 15-16.

Source: Wang Jianmin, *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, Wang Jianmin Guzheng Works Collection.

More variation is obtained by introducing ornamental notes to degree scale "6" as indicated in Figures 4 and 5, or by inclusion of a glissando into or out of this note. The two methods improve the melodic expressiveness and add to a more singing, vocal tone.



Figure 4: *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, bars 21- 22.

Source: Wang Jianmin, *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, Wang Jianmin Guzheng Works Collection.



Figure 5: *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, bar 47.

Source: Wang Jianmin, *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, Wang Jianmin Guzheng Works Collection.

Beyond motivic reference, the composer frequently reworks Kunqu-derived melodic material to generate new thematic content. As illustrated in Figure 6, the *Adagio* theme of the piece exhibits a melodic structure closely related to the fifth phrase of *Xin shui ling* (新水令, "New Water Order"), with ornamental and passing tones added between the principal pitches. In parallel, pitch-shifting techniques are employed extensively to establish a distinctive tonal system within the work. Instead of a direct quotation, these materials are reorganised with melodic expansion and pitch transformation, as well as structural incorporation in the form of a concerto.



Figure 6: *Xin shui ling* (新水令), fifth phrase.

Source : Traditional Kunqu Repertoire.

Application of Jiangnan Sizhu (江南丝竹) Musical Elements

Jiangnan Sizhu (江南丝竹), a traditional Chinese musical genre, is a significant branch of sizhu (丝竹, “silk and bamboo”) music and was historically known as xiansuo (弦索), serving as an accompaniment tradition for Kunqu opera (Chen & Sensai, 2023). “Sizhu” in Jiangnan Sizhu music means the combined use of string instruments and wind instruments in the traditional Chinese instrumental ensembles. Among these, the erhu and qudi generally fulfil the role of the principle melodic instruments, and such instruments as the pipa, yangqin, guzheng, ruan, and sheng are the accompanying and harmonic instruments (Thrasher, 2023).

In *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, only the guzheng and piano are employed. However, the composer utilises a variety of playing techniques to achieve a seamless integration between the two instruments. Through these techniques, the sonic characteristics of instruments commonly associated with Jiangnan Sizhu ensembles are evoked, thereby recreating the timbral impression of a full traditional Chinese instrumental group.

In the introduction of the piece, the composer simulates the sonic qualities of the yangqin. The playing technique in this passage, as shown in Figure 7, is an imitation of the percussive articulation typical of yangqin performance, which is fast and rhythmic.



Figure 7: *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, introduction, bar 2.

Source: Wang Jianmin, *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, Wang Jianmin Guzheng Works Collection.

In the extended phrases of the *Adagio* theme, shown in Figure 8, the extensive use of tremolo highlights the fluidity of the melodic line. In performance, the resulting timbre resembles that of the *qudi* or the erhu—the two principal instruments in Jiangnan Sizhu music. These timbral quotations are not reproductions but are reconsidered based upon the technical potential of the guzheng, which produces a changed sonic reflection of traditional ensemble practice.



Figure 8: *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, Adagio Section, bars 21-22.

Source: Wang Jianmin, *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*, Wang Jianmin Guzheng Works Collection.

Application of Sunan minge (苏南民歌) Music's Elements

Sunan minge (苏南民歌) is a folk song genre that originated in the southern part of the Jiangsu Province of China (Huang et al., 2024). Instead of directly quoting certain Sunan minge melodies, this guzheng concerto uses the language and expressive features that are connected with these folk traditions. The composer reminds us of folk-song idioms in an instrumental context by means of melodic contour adaptation, flexibility of rhythm, and organisation of phrases.

As summarised in Table 3, this study combines musical examples with relevant literature to analyse the presence of *Sunan minge* stylistic features in the work. The table also presents the way in which the components of the folk songs are displayed in the forms of tonality, phrase structure, and the developmental process. It is demonstrated that the incorporation of folk idioms in the concerto is not carried out as direct quotation but as the style transformation in the framework of the modern composition. The folk idioms are thus not preserved as fixed material but reshaped as flexible melodic and structural resources within a modern compositional framework.

Table 3: Music Features Associated with *Sunan Minge* Stylistic Elements in *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge*

Section	Musical features	Analytical focus
Introduction and slow-tempo theme	Predominantly pentatonic pitch organisation; stepwise melodic motion; flexible rhythm	Establishes a lyrical, folk-song-like expressive tone
Development of the slow-tempo theme	Phrase-based structure with call-and-response relationships	Reflects folk-song dialogic thinking and melodic singability
Middle section and cadenza	Rhythmic and motivic development of tonal material	Transformation of folk elements in an instrumental context
Recapitulation and coda	Reappearance of thematic material with rhythmic flexibility	Emotional culmination and structural coherence

Source: Analytical Summary by the Author, Based on Score Analysis and Relevant Literature.

The Application of Elements from Classical Chinese Poetry

The poem *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge* by Zhang Ji is also famous in China and internationally because of its vivid descriptions and emotional warmth (Yong, 2023). The poem discusses the inner thoughts of a traveller who is far from home, using vivid imagery of the setting moon, crying crows, lanterns on the river, and a lonely boat. Interpreting the interaction between the external scenery and inner feeling, the poem conveys the sense of being lonely, displaced, and longing during difficult times.

The guzheng concerto is directly inspired by this poetic source, and the musical structure reflects the emotional flow of the poem. The very first line creates a melancholy atmosphere, which is conveyed in the introduction through gentle phrases that appear from afar, gradually approach, and then recede. The subsequent slow-tempo section corresponds to the second line

of the poem. Here, alternating 4/4- and 6/4-time signatures create subtle rhythmic fluctuations, reinforcing the sense of emotional unease and introspection.

The third stanza of the poem is marked by an increased feeling of movement and intensity that is also expressed in the music, which uses a faster tempo and a more active rhythm, whereas the general direction of the melodic line is also descending, supporting a melancholic emotional colouring. The fourth line returns to a slower rhythm, and the musical material fades away as it transitions from intensity to calmness. This is followed by the work ending with left-hand arpeggiations, which bring about stillness and introspection and add to the feeling of solitude portrayed in the poem.

The integration of poetic images and musical music provides more expressiveness to the concerto. In the slow section, the secondary "one-beat-per-note" melody line below the main melody suggests visual images such as flickering lanterns and distant bells. A sudden acceleration in tempo subsequently captures the wandering thoughts of the traveller. Bars 41–44 and 45–48 form two converging phrases that employ a "fish-tail" compositional technique, analogous to *anadiplosis* in classical poetry. Just as *anadiplosis* links poetic lines into a continuous flow, this technique ensures melodic continuity in the *Andante* section, producing a seamless, lingering expressive effect.

Performance Interpretation: Expressing Musical Meaning through Technique

Building on the compositional analysis, the following section turns to performance interpretation, examining how these materials are realised through expressive and interpretative practice.

The guzheng concerto *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge* was the initial performance by the guzheng player Ren Jie, which was recorded in a very early audio recording published by guzheng.cn (2009). In addition, this study draws on a publicly available video recording of Ren Jie's later duet performance (2025), which serves as the primary analytical source, allowing for a more detailed examination of gesture, technique, and expressive nuance.

Introduction: Shaping Rhythm, Breath, and Dynamic Flow

The introduction is divided into two phrases that are closely interrelated, the second one being an echo of the first one in terms of melodic outline as well as rhythmic structure. Instead of a rigid metrical structure, the phrasing is presented with a flexibility, which is characterised by strong dynamic contrasts. In this passage, the Kunqu aesthetics of *jinda manchang* (紧打慢唱, "fast tempo with slow singing"), where rhythmic tension and expressive elasticity is present simultaneously, are interpreted by Ren Jie.

The opening perfect fourth intervals are performed in an alternation of tension and release in performance, producing a "tight-loose-tight" type of gesture. Towards the end of the passage, there is a slow increase in tempo which is accompanied by a restrained rise in the intensity of dynamics. The playing technique changed from right-hand yaozhi (摇指, tremolo) to alternating between both hands, followed by counter-rotating finger tapping, to a climax. A sharply accented attack and an immediate subsequent withdrawal of sound enhance the musical breathing. The introduction ends with counterpoint arpeggios played alternately by both hands,

the rhythm going from slow to fast and then to a brief pause; this contrast creates a strong rhythmic contrast, which constitutes the emotional characteristics of the composition.

Moreover, vibrato and slow-fast strumming are widely used in this part that reminds one of the drawn-out melodic movements (*laqiang*, 拉腔) of the Kunqu singing. These techniques lead the guzheng timbre towards the expressivity of the voice, which strengthens the connection between technique and the expression of emotion. This approach is the aesthetical value of *yiji dayi* (以技达意, "meaning expressed through technique") (Jia, 2023).

Scraping Technique as an Interpretative Device Across Structural Sections

The scraping technique serves as a repetitive yet very versatile interpretative effect throughout the concerto, which is abundant in the slow movement, the cadenza and the recapitulation of the slow section. Although the same fundamental method is used throughout these passages, its application, colouring nature and expressive purpose are quite different depending on the structural context and emotion pattern.

During the first slow opening, scraping is played with a restrained force and moderate tempo and is mainly based on the middle part of the strings. This creates a quiet and internal sonic nature in line with the imagery of stillness and the anchorage of the night. This technique acts in a poetic manner by creating an atmosphere of calm and introspection instead of a dramatic display.

By contrast, in the cadenza, scraping becomes markedly intensified. The acceleration, the physical force and the heightened registration make the gesture a moving expression. Scraping in this virtuosic context takes the music to an emotional and structural climax while building up the tension and projecting an expansive sonic presence.

In the recapitulation of the slow movement, the scraping technique is once again transformed. The performer uses a soft playing style characterised by gentle movements that have less dynamic range than usual, primarily executed on the left side of the bridge. This technique makes the music sound softer and calm-feeling and leads to its end.

A comparative reflection upon the three passages indicates that scraping is not a gesture which has been repeated mechanically but constantly reorganised according to the variation in musical structure, expressive intent and poetic image. The scraping technique, with this differentiated interpretative employment, then acquires dynamic expressive significance, determining the emotional outline as well as the formal sequence of the concerto itself. This demonstrates that performance techniques function as structural and expressive agents rather than merely decorative gestures.

Conclusion

This study has analysed the guzheng concerto *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge* through two interrelated dimensions: the organization of traditional Chinese musical elements in the composition and its realisation through performance interpretation. Based on the current literature and analysis through a score, this study has examined how traditional materials are reconfigured within a modern concerto structure and realised through performance.

The composition utilises much of the traditional modal system, pentatonic pitch structure, and *gong mode* principles at the level of the musical language. Instead of conserving these elements in a historic or historical sense, the composer rearranges them with modal alternation, an expansion of scales, and structural adjustment, which allow a modern rearticulation of the old musical language. In this way, the concerto can preserve the continuity of culture and, at the same time, gain a contemporary expressive language.

In terms of structure, the composition conforms to the formal principles of the concerto without overlooking the elements of narrative and poetry based upon Chinese aesthetic principles. The interplay between sectional organisation, thematisation, and the free passages in between is a synthesis between Western formal rigour and Chinese poetic rationale, which adds to the structural peculiarities of the work.

From a performance perspective, the study highlights the active role of interpretation in shaping musical meaning. Techniques such as glissando, scraping, tremolo, and dynamic shaping function not merely as technical devices but as expressive means through which performers articulate the poetic character of the work. Through embodied performance, traditional elements are further transformed, extending their expressive significance beyond compositional design.

In general, the analysis indicates that the traditional Chinese musical elements of *Night Mooring at Maple Bridge* work in a dynamic relationship between the composition and performance. This correlation, described in Table 2, shows that there is a process of conversion of traditional materials by making them structurally sound and re-articulating them by way of performance interpretation.

While this study does not propose a fixed analytical model, it offers an interpretative framework for understanding how the work may be analysed, performed, and experienced through the interaction between structure and embodied interpretation. Future research may extend this approach by comparing different performance interpretations, examining other guzheng concertos, and further exploring the transformation of traditional musical elements in contemporary Chinese instrumental music.

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