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## MTO 26.3 Examples: Kielian-Gilbert, Experiencing Chen Yi's Music

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)

[https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.20.26.3/mto.20.26.3.kielian\\_gilbert.html](https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.20.26.3/mto.20.26.3.kielian_gilbert.html)

**Example 1.** Chen Yi, brief biographical outline (adapted from Chen 2002)

1953. b. Guangzhou, Guangdong, China  
1966. Cultural Revolution (father, older sister taken away)  
1968–1970. Age 15, compulsory labor in China.  
1970–1978. Age 17, concertmistress & composer, Beijing Opera Troupe Orchestra;  
research in Chinese musical instruments  
1978–1986. MA, 1986, Beijing Central Conservatory, 1st woman to receive MA in  
composition [Chairman Mao's rule ends 1976.]  
1986–1993. DMA, Columbia University, study with Chou Wen Chung and Mario  
Davidovsky  
1993–1998. Composer residency, San Francisco (1993–1996); Peabody (1996–1998);  
University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music (1998)

**Example 2.** Chen Yi, selected works, 2001–2004

2001. *Ning for Pipa, Violin and Cello*  
2001. *Burning* for String Quartet  
2002. *Tu* ("to kill") for large orchestra (for symphonic band, 2003)  
2003. "Tradition and Creation," *Current Musicology* 67–68: 59–72  
2004. *Happy Rain on a Spring Night* for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano

**Example 3a.** Chen Yi, *Ning for Pipa, Violin and Cello*, mm. 1–29

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$\text{♩} = 56$  tragically

Violin

Pipa  
(b<sup>♭</sup>, d<sup>♯</sup>, e, a)

Cello

vcl.

vcl.

vcl.

vcl.

Vln.

Pipa

vcl.

18 arco

Vln. ff

Pipa ff

Vcl. 6 6 6

21

Vln. ff

Pipa ff

Vcl. 6 3 6

24 (J)

Vln. 3 3 3 3

Pipa 3 3 3 3

Vcl. 6 3 3 3 3

27

Vln. 6 6 6 6 5 5

Pipa (J) 6 6 6 6 5 5

Vcl. 6 6 6 6 5 5

**Example 3b.** Chen Yi, *Ning*, mm. 13–45

Musical score for Chen Yi's *Ning*, mm. 13–45. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (mm. 13–15) features the Vcl. (Violoncello) in the top staff, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes with dynamic *ff*. The second system (mm. 16–18) features the Vln. (Violin) in the top staff, playing sustained notes with dynamic *pizz.* The Pipa (a traditional Chinese instrument) is also present in the score, with its own staff. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *ff*, *fff*, and *fp*, and performance instructions like *pizz.* and *6* (likely referring to a sixteenth-note pattern). The instrumentation includes Vcl., Vln., and Pipa.

18 arco

Vln. ff

Pipa ff

Vcl.

21

Vln.

Pipa

ff

3

K

K

K

6

fff

Vcl.

6

3

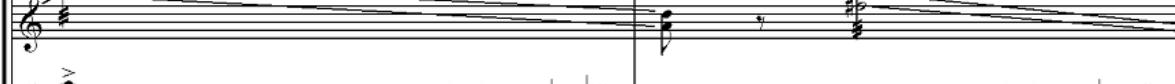
3

Musical score for strings and woodwind instruments. The score includes parts for Violin (Vln.), Pipa, and Vcl. (Double Bass). The score is in 24 measures. The Violin part features sixteenth-note patterns with grace notes and slurs. The Pipa part includes a dynamic marking of  $(d)$  and a grace note. The Double Bass part provides harmonic support with sustained notes and sixteenth-note patterns. Measure numbers 24, 6, and 3 are indicated at the beginning of the score.

Musical score for Violin (Vln.), Pipa, and Cello (Vcl.) at measure 27. The score is in 2/4 time. The Violin and Cello play eighth-note patterns, while the Pipa provides harmonic support with sustained notes and grace notes. Measure 27 concludes with a fermata over the final notes of the Cello line.

[30]

Vln. 

Pipa 

Vcl. 

[32]

Vln. 

Pipa 

Vcl. 

[34]

Vln. 

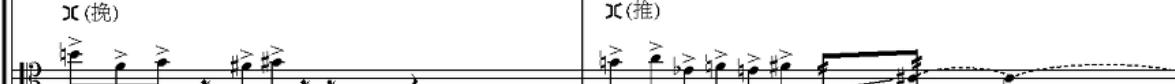
Pipa 

Vcl. 

[36]

Vln. 

Pipa 

Vcl. 

[38]

Vln.

Pipa

Vcl.

[40]

Vln.

Pipa

Vcl.

[42]

Vln.

Pipa

Vcl.

[44]

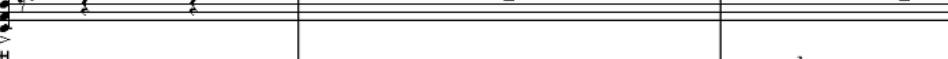
Vln.

Pipa

Vcl.

**Example 3c.** Chen Yi, *Ning*, mm. 46–71

46

Vln. 

Pipa 

Vcl. 

49

Vln. 

Pipa 

Vcl. 

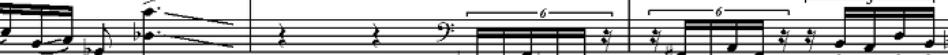
52

Vln. 

Pipa 

Vcl. 

55

Vln. 

Pipa 

Vcl. 

#### Example 4. Chen Yi, *Ning*: emergent processes and strands of memory

1. mm. 1–15/16, cello “**narrative 1**,” mm. 1–4, 5–8; 8–11+ 13–15 (lament with sighing pattern,” ending with sigh 2, F#4–E4–Bb4–A4–B4 = trace of “Mo Li Hua” fragment?)
2. mm. 15/16–45/46.  
mm. 15/16–21, cello “**narrative 1**” intensified, ascent to high Bb5 (m. 19), with pipa (*Jiao*) & violin interjections (mm. 17 & 18); mm. 21–33, “beating patterns” (sigh 2) begin in cello (mm. 21ff.), antiphonal exchange of sigh 2 between cello and violin mm. 24–25; pipa slides/pitch bends intensify, mm. 23–24, 25–27, 28–31, 33–45/46; mm. 33–34, violin & cello, antiphonal slides; m. 35, in heterophony (sigh 2) mm. 35–39 and 42–43; beating patterns resume in cello mm. 42–43, while mm. 33–45/46, pipa beating patterns intensify
3. mm. 46–87/88 [“Mo Li Hua” tune first in fragments, then more expansive]  
mm. 46–49, cello “**narrative 2**” (invocation, traces of #1, sigh 2 & “Mo Li Hua”?)  
mm. 50–55, “Mo Li Hua” fragments in cello m. 50 & sigh 2 pattern in violin, 51–55  
mm. 56–69, “Mo Li Hua” (cello) and sigh 2 patterns (violin) more expansive and antiphonal, m. 50ff. & 60/63ff. pipa *Lun*; m. 68ff., beating pattern in cello returns mm. 72–74ff., pipa cadenza & antiphonal return of sigh 2 pattern in violin and cello, m. 75ff. and in heterophony, m. 81ff.
4. mm. 88/89–108/09  
pipa, “**narrative 3**” with lament
5. mm. 109/10–148 [“Mo Li Hua” tune first expansive, then in fragments]  
mm. 109/10, “Mo Li Hua” tune in cello, fragments in violin & pipa, mm. 110–132;  
mm. 133–48, fragments of “Mo Li Hua” tune offset between violin and cello; as pipa presents chromatic scalar fragments concluding on D6 at mm. 146–151 (five-finger tremolo, *Wu Zhi Lun*)
6. mm. 149–167, 8ve doublings, cello & violin, transformations of “sigh 2” motive, combined with fragments of “Mo Li Hua” tune in diminution
7. mm. 168–183/84, “**Mo Li Hua**” tune in diatonic transformation (cf. mm. 132ff).
8. mm. 185–205  
mm. 185–193, double forte “memory motive” intrudes  
mm. 193–196, pipa, “**narrative close**”  
mm. 200–205, double forte, fragments of narrative 1 return, “Mo Li Hua” fragment inverted
9. mm. 206–231 (closing section)  
mm. 206–231, pentatonic fragments of tune, each paired with pipa in T4 transpositions

**Example 5.** Chen Yi (2002, Figure 7), the Chinese folk tune “Baban” [Ba (8), ban (beat, phrase)], annotated

5

Golden Section Ratio (.618 X 68 quarters = 42 quarters)

12

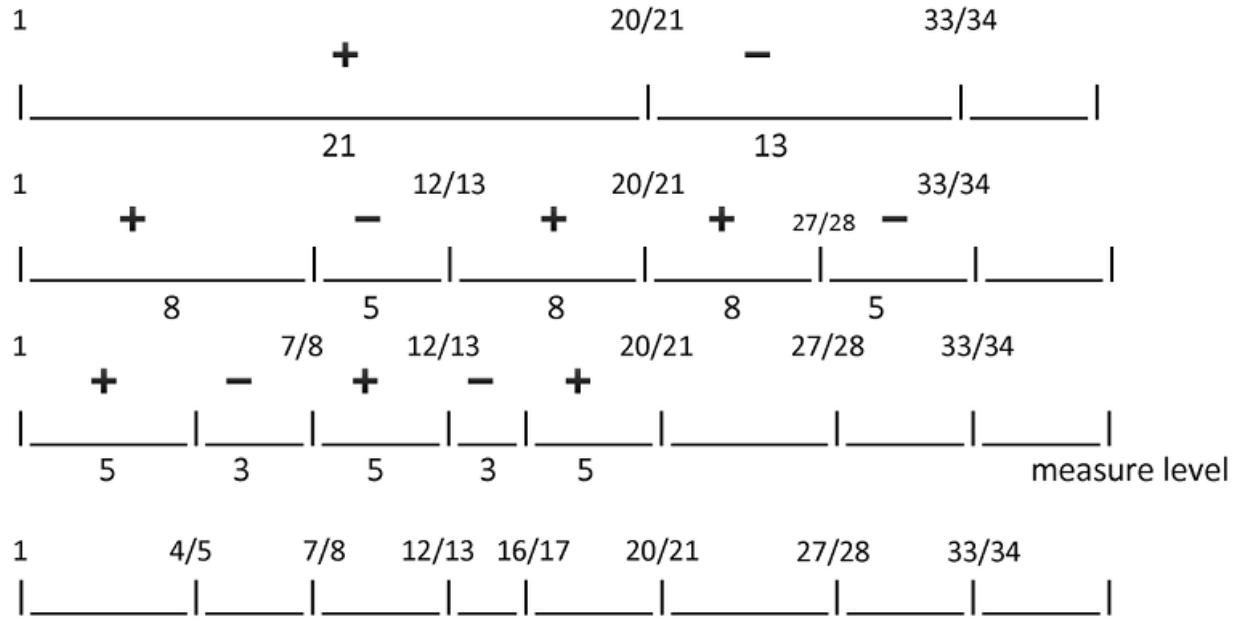
2 + 2

3

**Example 6.** Chen Yi, *Ning*, mm. 1–46: durational spans, attention, and memory

Fibonacci (summation) Series: (0,1), 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, **13**, **21**, **34**, 55, 89, 144, 233...

**1<sup>st</sup> Part**



$\text{J} = 8 + 5 + 3$        $\text{J} = (2) + 8 + 5$       quarter-note groups

vs. equal: 4 + 4      Pipa accents: m. 17 & 27/28

measures

**Example 7.** Chen Yi, “Mo Li Hua” from *A Set of Chinese Folk Songs*, Vol. 2, no. 6. Text translation of mm. 1–14.

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**6. Jasmine Flower (Mo Li Hua) (Jiangsu Folk Song, sung in Jiangsu dialect) 茉莉花**

Jasmine flower, such a beautiful flower, her sweet scent covers all others in the garden.

I want to pluck her for myself, but I'm afraid of the garden's keeper.

Jasmine flower, such a beautiful flower, she is as white as snow when she is blooming.

I want to pluck her for myself, but I'm afraid of gossips around.

Jasmine flower, such a beautiful flower, her looks can eclipse all others in the garden.

I want to pluck her for myself, but I'm afraid that she won't bud next year.

好一朵茉莉花，滿園花開香也香不過它。

我有心採一朵戴，又怕看花的人兒罵。

好一朵茉莉花，茉莉花開雪也白不過它。

我有心採一朵戴，又怕旁人笑話。

好一朵茉莉花，滿園花開比也比不過它。

我有心採一朵戴，又怕來年不發芽。

**Example 8a.** Chen Yi, "Mo Li Hua" from *A Set of Chinese Folk Songs*, Vol. 2, no. 6, mm. 1–14

**Moderato**  
*mp*

Soprano: Hao yit duo mo\_ li\_ hua, hao yit duo mo\_ li\_ hua, mun yun

Alto: Hao yit duo mo\_ li\_ hua, hao yit duo mo\_ li\_ hua, mun yun

Tenor: —

Bass: —

Piano: —

S. hua\_ kie\_ xiang ye xiang but go ta. [9] Ngo you xin\_ cie\_ yit duo die, you pa\_ ken hua di

A. hua\_ kie\_ xiang ye xiang but go ta. Ngo you xin\_ cie\_ yit duo die, you pa\_ ken hua di

T. —

B. —

Piano: —

S. jen\_ er\_ ma.

P. —

A. jen\_ er\_ ma.

T. —

B. —

Piano: —

**Example 8b.** Chen Yi, “Mo Li Hua” in *Ning for Pipa, Violin and Cello* (2002), mm. 110–125

111

1 2 3 4

114

1 2 3 4 5 6

117

5 6 7 8 / 9 10 11

12

120

4 5 6 7 8 1 2 3 4

123

5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

**Example 9. Chen Yi, *Ning*, ending, mm. 206–231. “Eight notes”**

206 *give pressure on the bow to make noise*

212 *xBb* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *yF#* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *zC* (1-2-3-4) *xD* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *zE* (1-2-3) *zG* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *4* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *5-6-7-8* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *8* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8)

217 *5-6-7-8* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *zE* (1-2-3) *zG* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *4* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *5-6-7-8* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *8* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8)

222 *4* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *5-6-7-8* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *8* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8)

227 *3-4* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *pizz.* *ppp* *5* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) *6-7-8* (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8)

(m. 209) (xBb)

Vln: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8

xBb: (C-D)-Bb-Db-Eb-Gb-Eb-Db

**m. 210 & 212 (xBb)**

Pipa: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8

xBb: Bb-Db- Eb- Gb-Eb- Db-Eb-Db

**m. 214 (T4x) (xD)**

Cello: 1 - 2 - z3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8

xD: D - F - G - Bb-G - F-G - (F)

**m. 213 (yD)**

Pipa: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8

yD: D-C - D - F - D - C - Bb - C - (Bb)

**m. 215 (T4y) (yF#)**

Vln: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8

yF#: F#- E- F# - A - F# - E - D - E - (D)

**m. 215 (zC) & 218 (zG)**

Pipa: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8

zC: (Bb)- C - Eb - F - G - Eb - C - Bb

**m. 221 (T4z) (zE)**

Pipa: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8

zE: (D)- E - G - A - B - G - E - D