

RULAN CHAO PIAN COLLECTION *Digitized*



香港中文大學
The Chinese University of Hong Kong



香港中文大學圖書館
The Chinese University of Hong Kong Library

East-West Connection in Music: Journey of Rulan Chao Pian Digitized Collection at The Chinese University of Hong Kong Library

Linda Lee
Head of Chung Chi College and Architecture Libraries
The Chinese University of Hong Kong Library, a member of IAML
PRRLA Annual Meeting, 14-16 September 2026

Rulan Chao Pian (1922–2013)



Rulan Chao Pian (1922–2013)



1922

Born in Cambridge, MA, to the renowned linguist Yuen Ren Chao and physician Buwei Yang Chao

1947

Began teaching Chinese and Music

1960

Ph.D. in East Asian Languages and Music, Radcliffe-Harvard

1974

Professor of Music and of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University

One of the first ten female full professors at Harvard

1975-

Frequent visiting professor at CUHK Music Department

1982

Professor Emerita of Music and of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University

2006

Donated lifetime collection to CUHK Library

Daughter of Yuen Ren Chao (趙元任), a renowned Chinese-American linguist, musician



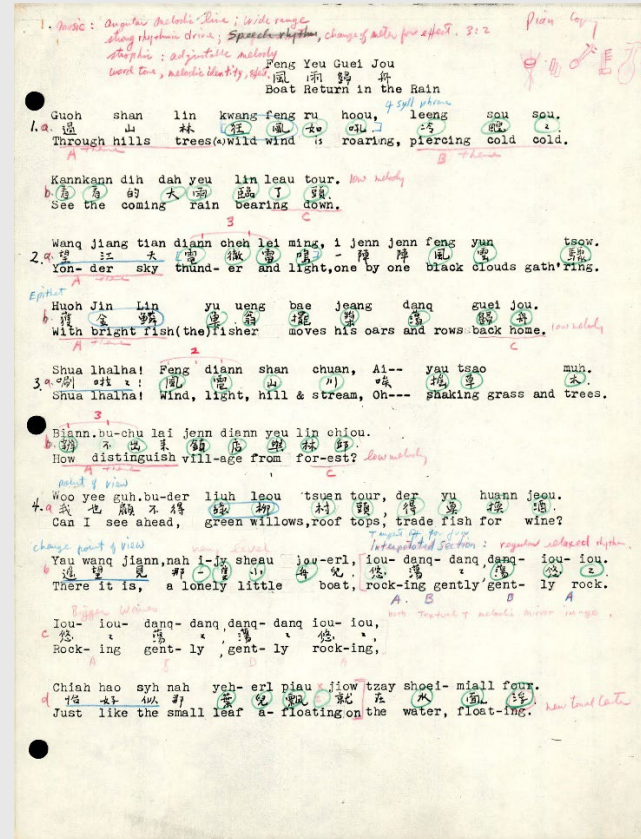
“In our childhood my sisters and I were exposed mainly to Western classical music because of our father's interests. However, I did have some interesting encounters with certain kinds of Chinese traditional music.”

— Extracted from ACMR Reports,
Spring 1995

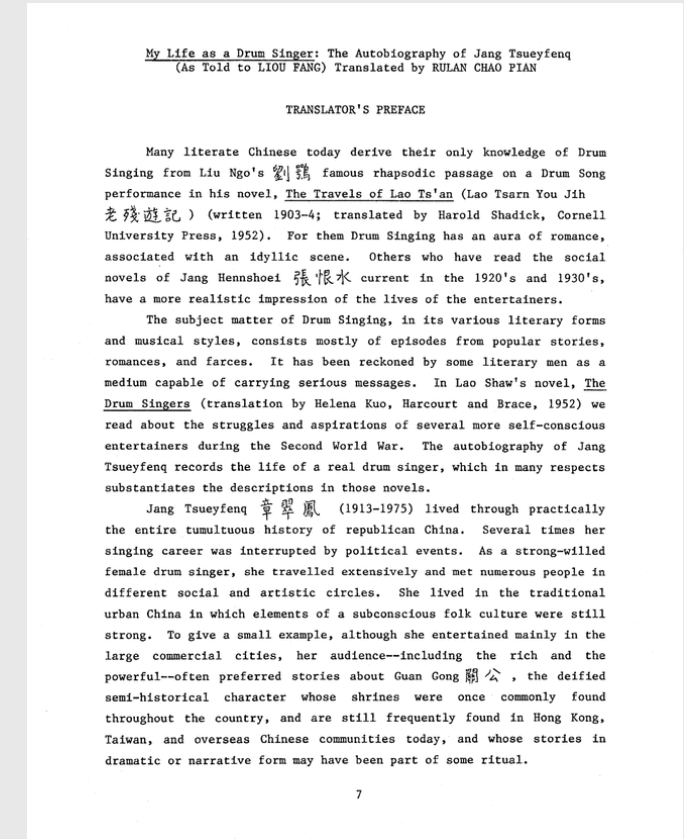


Pioneering Ethnomusicologist

- Pioneered the study of Peking Opera, Song dynasty musical history, and Chinese narrative music using rigorous analytical methods
- Integrated oral history into ethnomusicological research



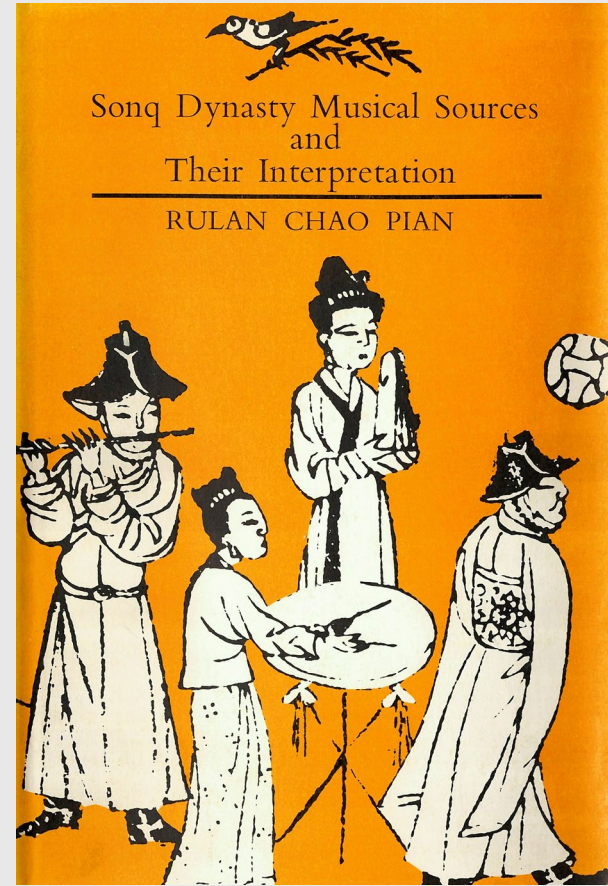
Applied analytical techniques to ethnomusicological studies



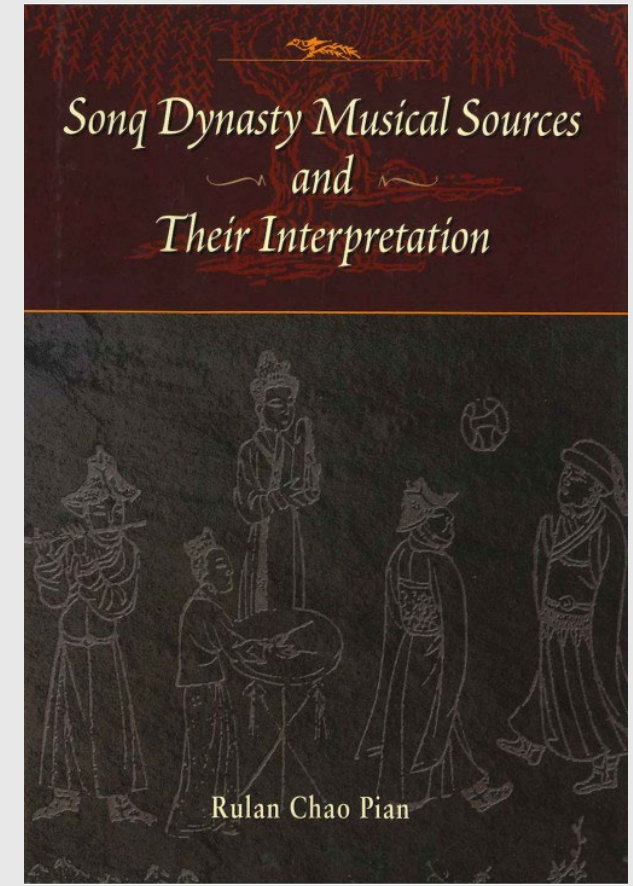
"My Life as a Drum Singer: The Autobiography of Jang Tsueyfenq (As Told to Liou Fang)." *Chinoperl Papers* 13: 7–106, 1983.

Pioneering Ethnomusicologist

- Her 1967 monograph *Song Dynasty Musical Sources and Their Interpretation* won the American Musicological Society's Otto Kinkeldey Award
- Still a standard reference on Song-dynasty modes and notation



Rulan Chao Pian. *Song Dynasty Musical Sources and Their Interpretation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967.



Rulan Chao Pian. *Song Dynasty Musical Sources and Their Interpretation*. Reprinted. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2003.

Pioneering Ethnomusicologist

- Traveled extensively across East Asia with heavy recording equipment, documenting performances, interviews, and cultural events over decades.



Yuzhen Luo, *Peking Drum Song*
Recorded in Beijing.



Founding Member of

- Conference on Chinese Oral and Performing Literature (CHINOPERL) (1969)
- Association for Chinese Music Research (1986)

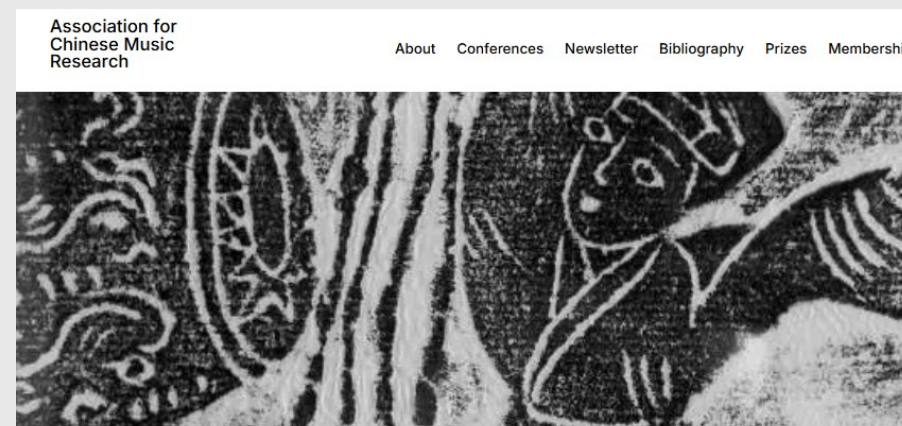
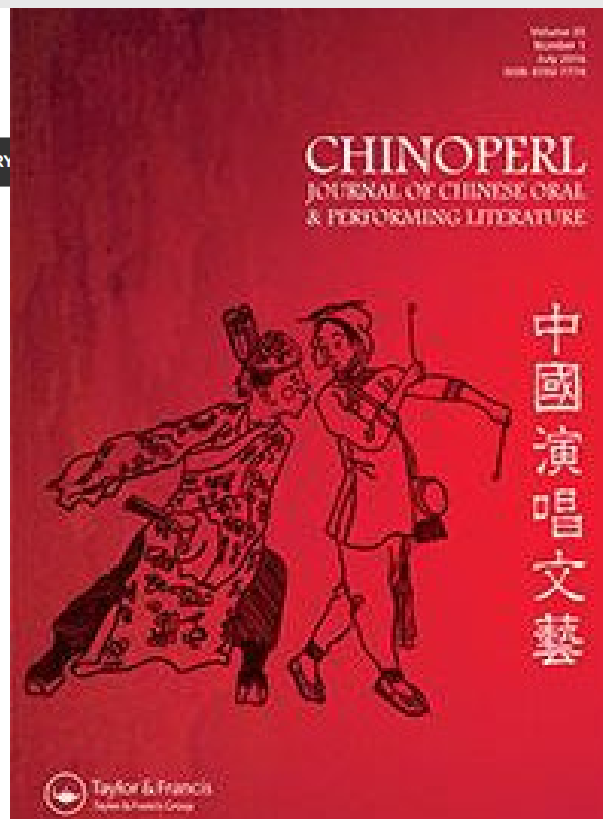


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About Us

Chinese Oral and Performing Literature (CHINOPERL) (中國演唱文藝研究會) is an organization that is devoted to the research, analysis and interpretation of oral and performing traditions, broadly defined, and their relationship to China's culture and society. Its [membership](#) — including [life members](#) — consists of scholars in the humanities and the social sciences who recognize the significance of oral performance to Chinese literature and culture.

The full name of the organization is the **Permanent Conference on Chinese Oral and Performing Literature**, abbreviated as **CHINOPERL**. It was founded in 1969 by a group of eminent scholars, such as Yuen Ren Chao 趙元任, 1892–1982; Harold Shadick, 1915–1992, and Cyril Birch, 1925–, who recognized the uniqueness and the significance of oral performance to Chinese literature. The purpose of the association is to encourage the recording, study, and practice of traditional forms of Chinese literature that are primarily oral, such as storytelling, opera, ceremonial chanting, and folksongs, as well as those that have traditionally been enhanced by singing and intoning. The very important topic of the interplay between oral and written texts has always been central to the journal. Since 1982, various modern genres, such as spoken drama, new musical plays,



About

ACMR serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas and for those interested in the scholarly study of Chinese music.

History

At the Thirty-First Annual Conference of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) in Rochester, N.Y., October 16-19, 1986, a group of participants with research interests in China held an impromptu meeting to acquaint themselves with one another and their work. It was unanimously felt that similar meetings should be held in the future and that a group should be formed whose membership is to comprise scholars interested in Chinese music, and whose purpose is to establish channels for communication and a forum for exchange of ideas. At

The Scholarly Legacy of Prof. Pian

Bell Yung (榮鴻曾)

- Professor Emeritus of Music, University of Pittsburgh

Joseph Lam (林萃菁)

- Professor of Musicology, University of Michigan

Siu Wah Yu (余少華)

- BA (CUHK); MA (Queen's University, Belfast); PhD (Harvard)
- Honorary Senior Research Fellow
- The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Perry Link (林培瑞)

- Emeritus Professor of East Asian Studies, Princeton University
- Chancellorial Chair Professor for Innovation in Teaching Across Disciplines, University of California, Riverside



(From left) Bell Yung, Prof. Pian, Joseph Lam, Siu Wah Yu



(From left) Perry Link, Prof. Pian

Rulan Chao Pian Collection Digitization Project



Overview

Coverage: 1940s to 2000s



Peking Opera Recordings

Commercial and non-commercial recordings spanning decades of Chinese theatrical tradition



Rare Books & Monographs

Spanning ethnomusicology, Western musicology, Chinese literature, and world music



Field Recordings

Original ethnographic recordings from East Asia, capturing performances and interviews



Teaching Materials

Lecture notes, slides, and course materials from four decades at Harvard



Musical Instruments

18 instruments collected globally, used in her teaching and research



Personal Papers

Correspondence, diaries, photographs documenting cultural and political history



Cassette tapes



Guqin, a seven stringed zither

Project Goals

Making the collection accessible across the world



Video Collection

Digitized performances, fieldwork footage, and interviews accessible online



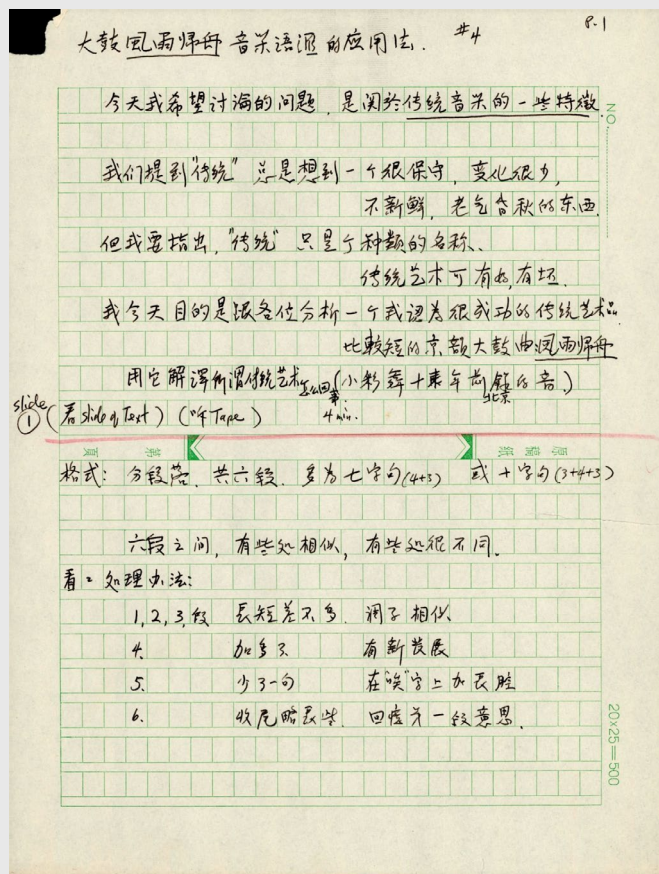
Audio Collection

Thousands of recordings digitized for research and educational use



Manuscripts & Papers

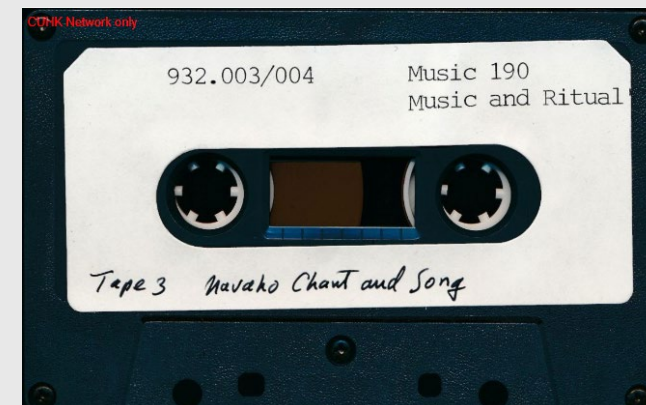
Personal correspondence, research notes, and lecture materials preserved digitally



Manuscript



Converted from Open Reel



Converted from Cassette Tape
Digitized and available online

Project Scope

3,773

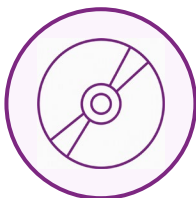
AUDIOVISUAL
ITEMS

Sound & video recordings



LP records

Vinyl gramophone discs



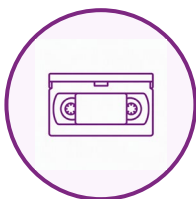
Compact discs

CD audio recordings



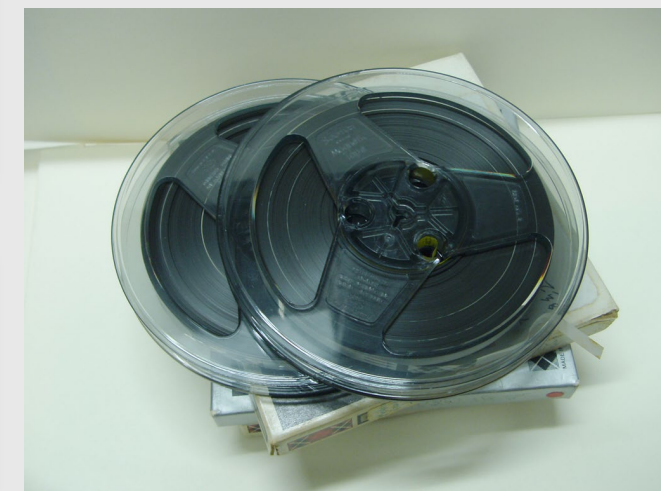
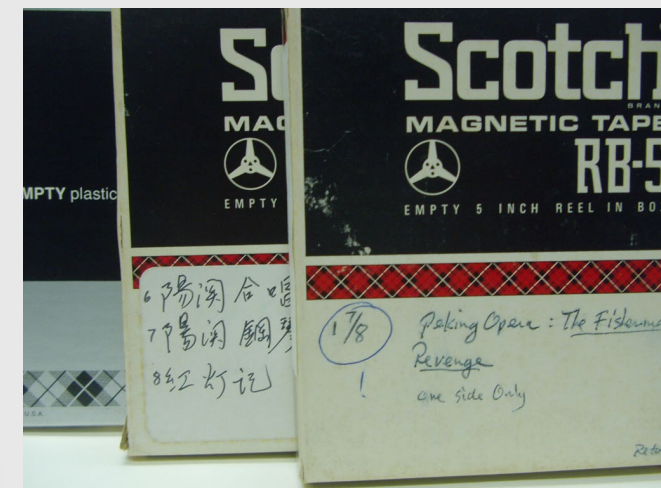
Audio cassettes

Magnetic tape cassettes,
Open reel sound tape



Video tapes

BetaMax, U-Matic, Open
reel video, V8, VHS



Open Reel



Project Scope

238,443

NON-AUDIOVISUAL
ITEMS

Documents, images & objects

Manuscripts & teaching materials

93 boxes · ca. 196,000 sheets

Diaries & notebooks

149 volumes · ca. 3,500 sheets

Books & journals

158 boxes · 6,355 volumes

Photographs

ca. 129 albums · 28,265 photos

Slides & microfilms

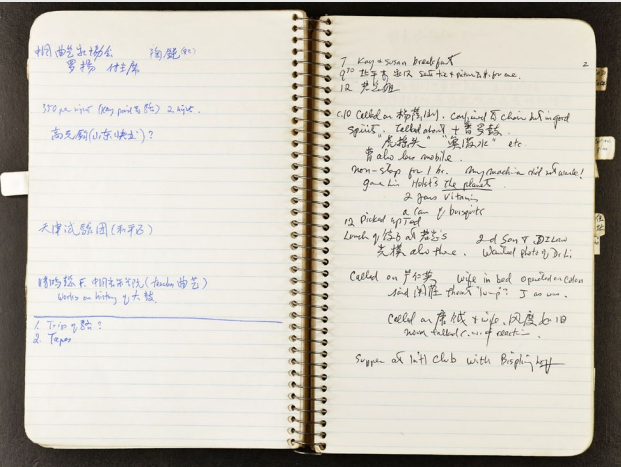
ca. 4,035 slides · 22 rolls

Instruments, artwork & objects

137 items



Flat drum (*Biangu*), Cymbals



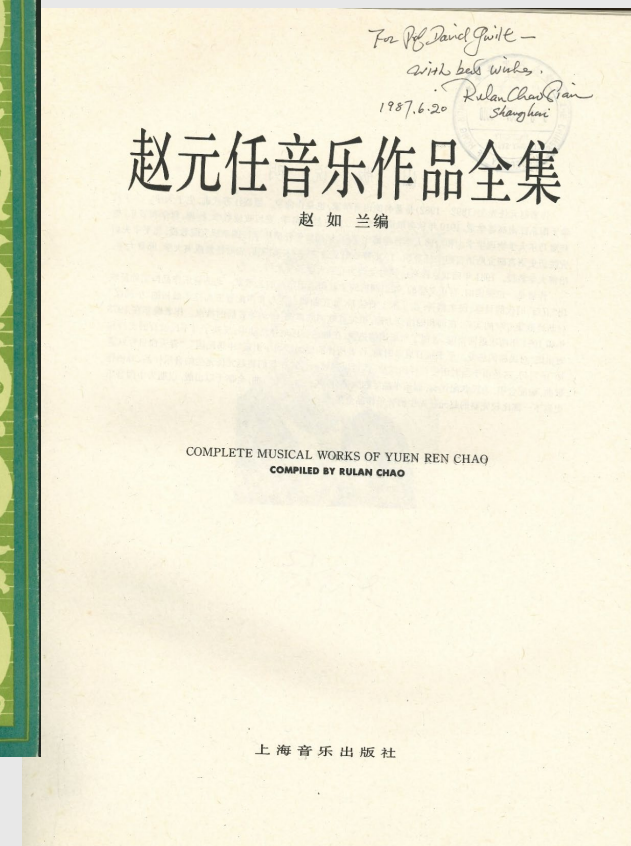
Diary

Includes work of Prof. Pian's father



Chao, Yuen Ren. *The Complete Musical Works of Yuen Ren Chao*. Compiled by Rulan Chao Pian. Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press, 1987.

Contributor	卞趙如蘭 >
Subject (LCSH)	Music -- China > Songs, Chinese >
Publisher	上海: 上海音樂出版社
Edition	第1版.
Creation Date	1987.
Description	3, 8, 269 p., [1] leaf of plates : music, port. ; 31 cm.
Language	Chinese
Donor Collection	卞趙如蘭捐贈藏品.
Other title	<u>Complete musical works of Yuen Ren Chao.</u>



Timeline

Phase 1: Collecting Donation

1



2006

Prof. Pian signed the initial agreement, donating entire collection of research, fieldwork & teaching materials.

2



2007

CUHK Library began end processing, cataloguing, and digitizing higher-priority items from the collection.

3



The Library received other major music donations. 251 boxes were shipped from Cambridge, MA.



Timeline

Phase 2: From the gift to digitization

4



2010

Donation Ceremony of Rulan Chao Pian Music Collection



(From left) Dr. Colin Storey, University Librarian
Prof. Michael McClellan, Music Department Chairman
Ms. Canta Pian, Daughter of Prof. Pian

5



2014

Ms. Canta Pian, Prof. Pian's daughter, donated the remaining papers & instruments and granted open-access rights.

6



2015

Large-scale digitization launched, backed by the Theodore H.H. Pian and Rulan Chao Pian Memorial Fund.

Timeline

Phase 3: Scaling up to open access

7



2016

Archival process of Rulan Chao Pian Collection was completed.

8



2019

The digitized collection became accessible to library users on the CUHK Digital Repository.

9



Ongoing

Open access on the CUHK network with ongoing article-level indexing



Project Workflow

1



Digitization

- Material preparation
- Scanning
- File naming



2

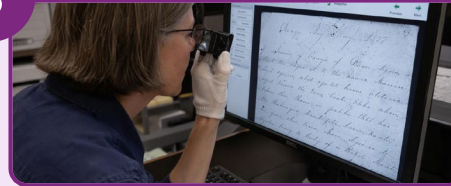


Processing & Indexing

- Image cropping & format conversion
- Layout recognition & OCR processing
- Metadata indexing



3



Quality Control

- Data backup
- General CSV file checking
- QC with 5% sampling
- Error rate check and revision cycle



4



Data Ingestion

- Final data approval
- Data ingestion to database
- Checking and confirmation



Digitized Collection



Audio
1,591 items



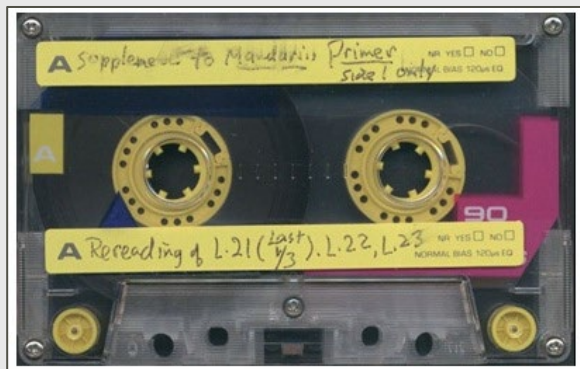
Video
338 items



Photos
68,300 items



Manuscripts
110,140 items



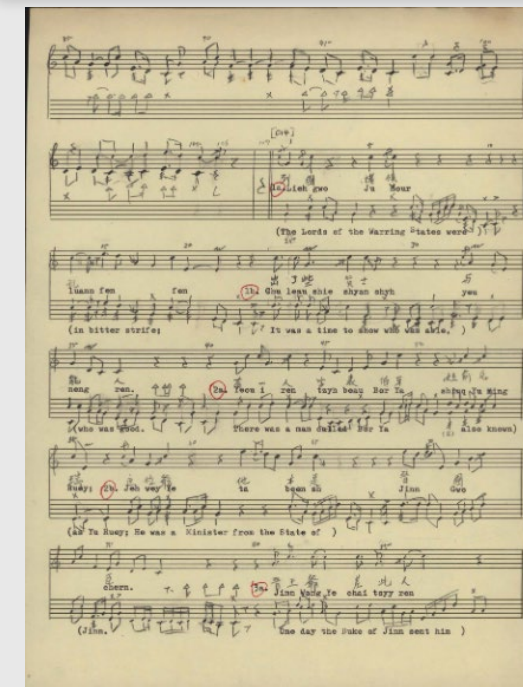
Cassette recording for *Mandarin Primer*



Concert *Night before Jiu zhou*, 1990



Playing a Japanese *biwa*, Tokyo, 1958



Score



Slides
4,400 items

**TOTAL
DIGITIZED FILES**

184,769

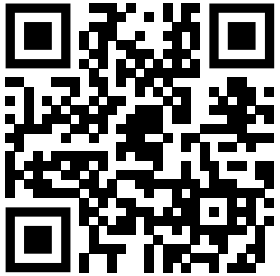


Digital Repository: Rulan Chao Pian Collection





CUHK Digital Repository





香港中文大學圖書館
The Chinese University of Hong Kong Library

Collections Services About A A A 繁·簡

CUHK Digital Repository

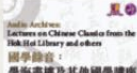
The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) Digital Repository is the one-stop repository for accessing all the publicly available digital content created and maintained by the CUHK Library. [More](#)

Q

Browse all digitized collections [Advanced Search](#)

Latest collections

Below is a set of digitized collections. To view all digitized collections click [here](#).

 新中國地區報章資料庫 NEW CHINA REGIONAL NEWSPAPER DATABASE	 中國古地圖 Antique Maps of China	 張有興特藏 Hilton Cheong-Leen Collection	 蔡德允琴學 資料典藏 Tsar Teh-yun Collection on Qin Studies	 黎麗寧 Helen Lai Dance Archive	 Pith Paintings Collection	 道風山建築特藏 TAO FONG SHAN ARCHITECTURE COLLECTION
 香港戲劇特藏	 香港中文大學六十周年 口述歷史項目 CUHK 60TH ANNIVERSARY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT	 香港特藏 Hong Kong Collection	 Archives of Christian Study Centre and Chinese Religion and Culture	 香港中文大學 殷甲骨集 Oracle Bones Collection	 香港視覺藝術年鑑 hong kong visual arts yearbook	

Digital Repository: Rulan Chao Pian Collection



香港中文大學圖書館

The Chinese University of Hong Kong Library

Collections

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All collections

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Digitised Collections

Below is a set of digitized collections. To view all digitized collections click [here](#).

A-Z list | by Subject



3D Human Anatomy Collection



A Grain of Sand: Poems from Hong Kong



Antique Maps of China



Archive of Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture



Audio Archives: Lectures on Chinese Classics from the Hok Hoi Library and others



Bei Shan Tang Collection



Chinese in Cuba Archive



Chinese Medicine Texts Collection



Chinese Rare Book Digital Collection



Chinese Women and Hong Kong Christianity: An Oral History Archive



CUHK 60th Anniversary Oral History Project



CUHK Library Online Exhibitions



Cultural Revolution in Images: Caricature-Posters from Guangzhou 1966-1977



Daoist Texts Collection



David Hawkes Archive



E-Journal Collection



Electronic Theses & Dissertations Collection



From The Treasure House – Jewels from The Chinese University of Hong Kong Library



Helen Lai Dance Archive



Hilton Cheong-Leen Collection



Hong Kong Collection



Hong Kong Drama Collection



Hong Kong Early Tabloid Newspapers



Hong Kong Literature Database



Hong Kong Visual Arts Yearbook



Land Deeds Collection



Lingnan Collection



Minguo Collection



Modern Chinese Drama Collection



New China Regional Newspaper Database



Oracle Bones Collection from The Chinese University of Hong Kong



Pith Paintings Collection



Postbills of Cantonese Opera



Praying Mantis Master Wong Hon Fan Collection



Rulan Chao Pian Collection



Sheng XuanHui Archive



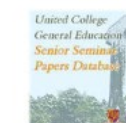
Tao Feng Shan Architecture Collection



The Last Generation of the Majie (Cantonese Amahs) in Hong Kong: An Oral History Archive



Tsar Teh-yun Collection on Qin Studies



United College General Education Programme Senior Seminar Papers Database



University Archives



Rulan Chao Pian Digitised Collection



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Search the Collection

[Browse all items in this Collection](#)

About the Collection

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[Rulan's father - Chao Yuen Ren](#)

[Works by Rulan](#)

[Works on Rulan](#)

[Audio Collection](#)

[Video Collection](#)

[Manuscript Collection](#)

[Photo Collection](#)

[Donation to CUHK](#)

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[--Musical Instruments](#)

Rulan Chao Pian Collection



The Chinese University of Hong Kong Library wishes to express our greatest gratitude and deepest appreciation to Professor Rulan Chao Pian (1922-2013) for generously donating her entire collection of research, fieldwork, and teaching materials to the Library. In the initial donation agreement in 2006, she wrote, "hopefully my donation would also facilitate donation of similar kinds, thereby creating an open and comprehensive collection on Chinese music and related arts." The well wishes of Professor Pian came true, the CUHK Library has since received other extra-ordinary donations on music, amongst them the valuable donation from the Yam Pak Foundation on Cantonese opera. In 2014, thanks to the generosity of Dr. Canta Pian, daughter of Professor Pian, the CUHK Library was gifted with the remaining collection of Professor Pian's personal papers and musical instruments, as well as the authorization to digitize and make available resources and works created by Professor Pian for open access.

Professor Rulan Chao Pian was Emeritus Professor of East Asian Languages and Civilizations and of Music at Harvard University. As cited by The new Grove dictionary of music and musicians (Online), "Pian travelled to China regularly, bringing the latest Western ideas and publications there, and returning to America with a wealth of fieldwork data and audio-visual recordings, materials that preserve and illustrate Chinese music to American audiences." Professor Pian was an inquisitive field-worker, she established her collection over a half century. Started in the 1960s, she regularly visited East Asian countries not only to collect books, musical instruments, and tapes, but also to record performances, events and interviews, carrying bulky recorders and cameras.

Professor Pian's collection is one of the most valuable collections on Chinese Music in the world. The greatest part of the collection consists of photographs, rare books, and monographs, ranging from the disciplines of ethnomusicology, Western musicology, Chinese languages and literatures to Chinese music, East-Asian music, and World music. The collection of audio-visual materials comprises commercial and non-commercial recordings of Peking Opera, revolutionary model opera, Chinese narrative music, East-Asian music, and Western music. The donated materials also includes Professor Pian's teaching materials at Harvard University, open-reel recorders and video machines purchased and preserved by Professor Pian which were the latest and advanced models in the old days, and some musical instruments collected by Professor Pian and used in her teachings.

The Rulan Chao Pian Collection captures the social, cultural and political lives of the time, and constitutes an invaluable reference source for musicologists, scholars, researchers, as well as performers. In order to share the resources with the wider community, the Library began to digitize high priority items as early as 2007, and in 2015, with the support from the Theodore H.H. Pian and Rulan Chao Pian Memorial Fund and the University, the

<https://repository.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/en/collection/rcp>

Home > Digital Collections > Rulan Chao Pian Collection 卜趙如蘭特藏 >

Audio Collection 錄音資料

Grid view List view

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ... next > last »



#8 Music 198 Tape 10 杜十娘



0-25 : Karabaic Collection, item 1
through middle of 19 ; 25-43 : Festival of
Krk, 1962 (Fajdetic recordings), items 3-
5



1 : 盡力中華; 中華我中華; 江上撐船; 春
朝



10 : Chao Basic English



100, 學生報告 1989



105a 學生發音



(11) 楊蔭瀏2,3 : 曲藝一



12, 曲藝 both sides 2-3



(13) 湖南花鼓戲



14 : Berkeley Talk on Social & Political
background of Yuen Ren Chao's Musical
Composition. 糊塗老



14 中國音樂學院meeting 9/10/82



154 001 Cantonese Foundation Work

[Home](#) > [Digital Collections](#) > [Rulan Chao Pian Collection 卞趙如蘭特藏](#) > [Audio Collection 錄音資料](#) >

(11) 楊蔭瀏2,3 : 曲藝一

Full Text

Description



Suggest

Part of: (11) 楊蔭瀏2,3 : 曲藝一
(2 objects)

[Next](#)

[Switch to Transcription Viewer](#)

Side A



Side B





Home > Digital Collections > Rulan Chao Pian Collection 卞越如蘭特藏 > Audio Collection 錄音資料 >

(11) 楊蔭瀏2,3 : 曲藝一

Full Text Description

Details

In Collection	Audio Collection 錄音資料
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Publisher/Publication	[Hong Kong] : : [Chinese University of Hong Kong Library], 2015
Date Issued	2015-01-01T00:00:00Z
Resource Type	electronic resource remote
Note	Electronic reproduction from Rulan Chao Pian Audio Cassette Collection.
Local Note	Minimal-level records
Description	streaming audio files (ca. min.) : digital, sound
Language(s)	chi
Access Condition(s)	Use of this resource is governed by the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons "Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International" License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)
Link to Library Record	https://julac.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/search?query=addsrc...
Item URL	https://repository.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/en/item/cuhk-1605727

Part of: (11) 楊蔭瀏2,3 : 曲藝一
(2 objects)

Next

Side A



Side B



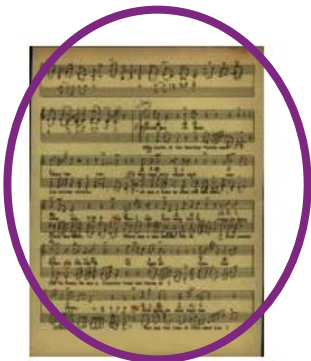


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Manuscript Collection 手稿資料

Grid view List view

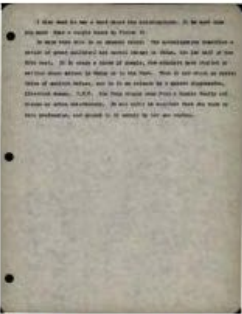
« first ‹ previous 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ... next › last »



1 score (2 sheet (3 pages)) (incomplete).
Holograph. Transcriptions of 《子期聽琴》 with Chinese lyrics, English translation and Romanized text (Note 2)



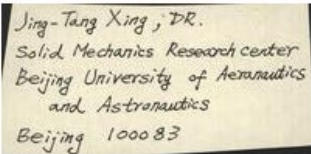
1 sheet. Holograph. Introduction to the autobiography of a drum singer in the 1st half of 20th century China



1 sheet. Typescript. Background information on the autobiography of a drum singer in the 1st half of 20th century China



A 1-Society for Asian Music



A 1-Unsorted Addresses



A 1-Untitled Folder



A 1-Untitled folder



A 1-Untitled folder



Home › Digital Collections › Rulan Chao Pian Collection 卡薩如蘭特藏 › Manuscript Collection 手稿資料 ›

1 score (2 sheet (3 pages)) (incomplete). Holograph. Transcriptions of 《子期聽琴》 with Chinese lyrics, English translation and Romanized text (Note 2)

Full Text

Description

1 of 3 Page Width

[D14]

1a. Lieh gwo Ju Hour

(The Lords of the Warring States were)

1b. Chu leau shie shyan shyh

(in bitter strife; It was a time to show who was able,)

2a. Yeou i ren tzyh beau Bor Ya

who was good. There was a man called Bor Ya

2b. Jeh wey ye ta been sh Jinn Gwo

瑞是位爺他本是晉國

Suggest



Home > Digital Collections > Rulan Chao Pian Collection 卞趙如蘭特藏 >

Musical Instrument

Grid view List view



Khawng meng



京胡



古琴



唢呐



塔布拉鼓



大正琴（鳳凰琴）



大正琴（鳳凰琴）



扁鼓



曲項琵琶



曲項琵琶



板鼓 Banu



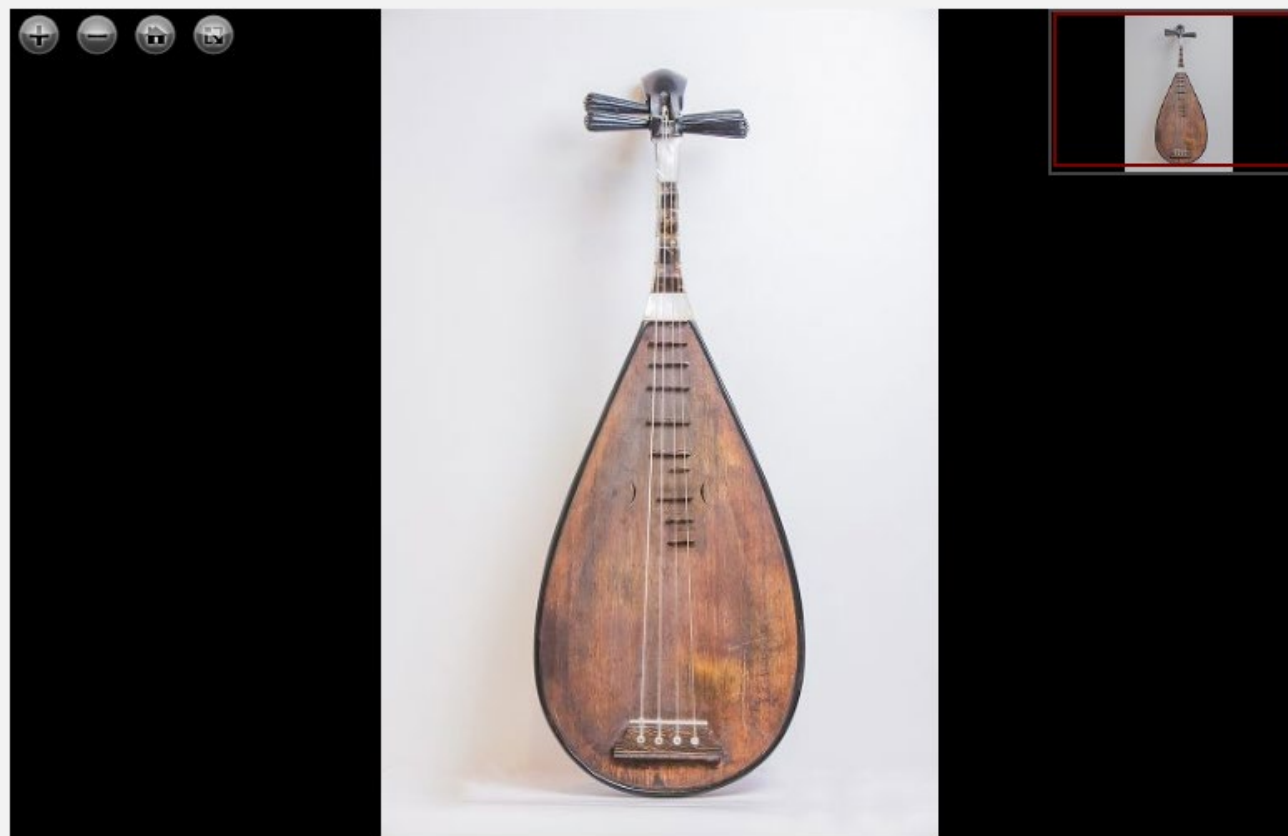
椰胡

[Home](#) › [Digital Collections](#) › [Rulan Chao Pian Collection 卞趙如蘭特藏](#) › [Musical Instrument](#) ›

曲項琵琶

Full Text

Description



A four stringed plucked lute *pipa*



[Home](#) > [Digital Collections](#) > [Rulan Chao Pian Collection 卞趙如蘭特藏](#) >

Video Collection 視頻資料

[Grid view](#) [List view](#)

« first < previous ... 5 6 7 8 **9** 10 11 12 13 ... next > last »



JRH birthday 2



Kayageum



Kayageum Sanjo : Korean traditional music



Korean concert in Kvesge auditorium



Korean music concert : Hwang Byong-ki concert on the Kayagum



Korean traditional music : Kagok (long lyric poem) : 25 songs



Korean traditional music : P'an sori "Shimch 'ongga"



[Korean traditional music]



Korean traditional music : Kagok (long lyric poem) : 25 songs 2



Korean traditional music : P'an sori "Shimch 'ongga" 2



Lecture by Bayard



Lecture by Luise Vosgerchian



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Kayageum Sanjo : Korean traditional music

Full Text

Description

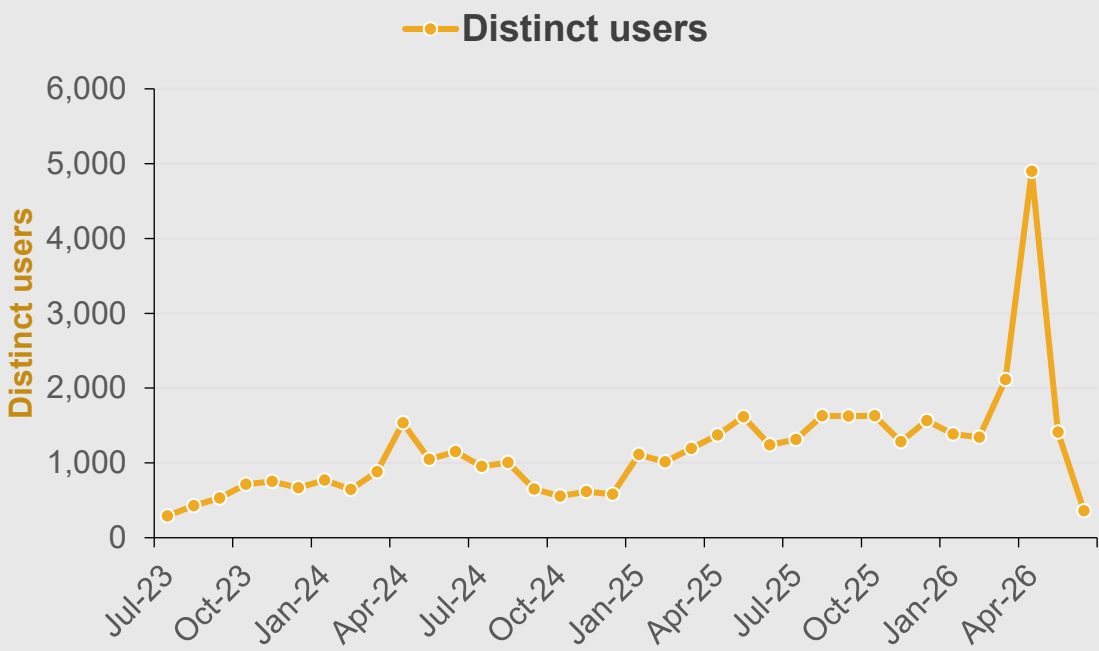
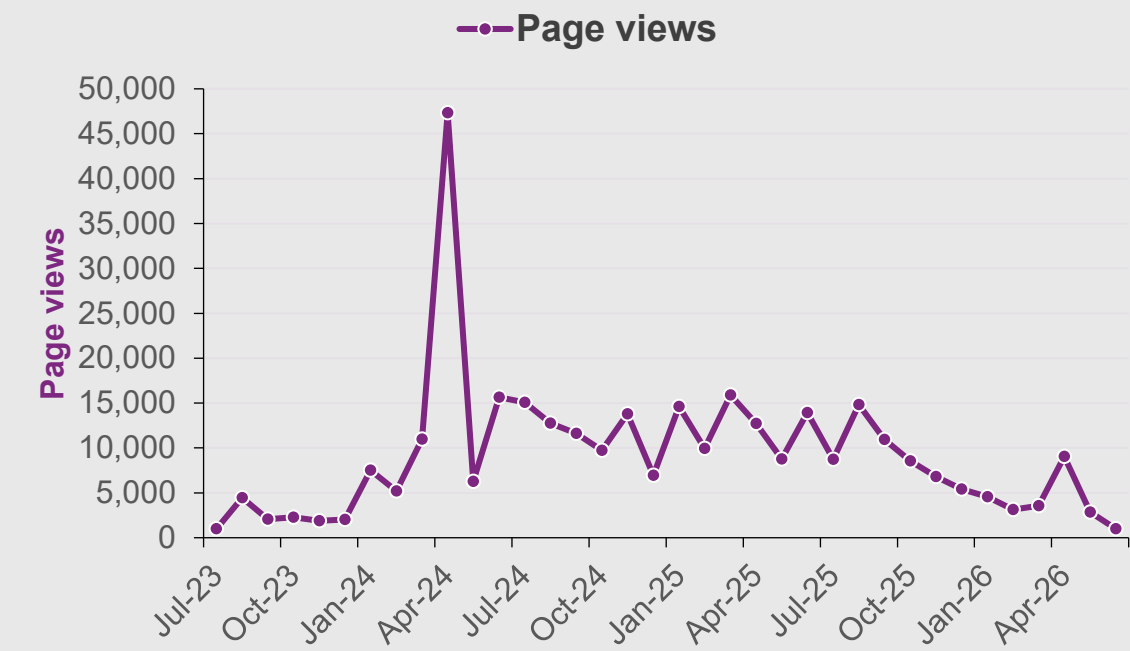


Solo music for Korean zither (*gayageum*)



Usage Data

Monthly web traffic and distinct users, Jul 2023 – Jun 2026



331,753
Total page views
(Jul 2023 – Jun 2026)

Apr 2024
Peak monthly views

Apr 2026
Peak monthly users

+73%
Web traffic growth
(Q3 2023 → Q2 2026)



Usage Data

Top 3 Most-viewed items since the beginning

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北京語音表 = Table of the Speech Sounds of Beijing Dialect • 排印本1張 (影印本) • (Note 2)

Full Text Description

1 of 1

Table of the Speech Sounds of Beijing Dialect

1) In unit II, 1 sheet. Typescript with handwritten notes about Tone Sandhi. With handwritten notes

2) Tone Sandhi, 2 sheets. Typescript with handwritten notes

3) Add to Tone Sandhi exercise in Unit 5, 1 sheet. Typescript with handwritten notes (photocopy)

4) Tone Sandhi, 2 sheets. Typescript with handwritten notes. With

Suggest

1st Runner-up

A table of Beijing dialect speech sounds
990 views

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Lesson XX 20.1. The Passive Form of the Verb; Pron Test Chinese 101. 1 sheet. Typescript (mimeographed). Attached a sheet of a. From romanization. Holograph. With handwritten notes

Full Text Description

1 of 2

LESSON XX
20.1. THE PASSIVE FORM OF THE VERB.

The Japanese verb has a so-called passive form which has several different functions, only one of which resembles that of the English passive. The form is made in the first conjugation by the addition of the inflected verbal ending *-reru* to the negative stem, as in *yomareru* from *yomu*. In the second conjugation and with *kuru* it is formed by adding the inflected verbal ending *-rareru* to the negative stem, as in *mirareru*, *taberareru*, and *korareru* from *miru*, *taberu*, and *koru*. The endings *-reru* and *-rareru* are themselves inflected like second conjugation verbs.

The passive use of this form is construed in two different ways in Japanese. The less common way is with the subject as the thing acted upon, as in English. The more typical Japanese way is with the subject representing the person who "suffers" from the action of the passive verb and not the thing acted upon. Hence, intransitive verbs can have passive forms, and transitive verbs retain their normal active objects with *o*. The agent of the act is always indicated by *ni*. An example with a transitive verb is *yatakushi wa tegami o haha ni yomareta*. "I 'suffered' from the fact that the letter was read by my mother," or more simply "My letter was read by mother." An example with an intransitive verb is *Aoki-san wa tomodachi ni korarete shigoto ga dekinakatta*. "Mr. Aoki was visited by a friend and could not do his work."

Pronunciation Test. 1 sheet. Typescript (mimeographed). With handwritten notes (Note 2)

Pronunciation Test. 1 sheet. Typescript (mimeographed). A copy with handwritten notes (Note 2)

Pronunciation Test. 1 sheet. Typescript (mimeographed). A copy with handwritten notes (Note 2)

Chinese B Review: Pronunciation Test (through Lesson 9)

Suggest

Champion

Words from Chinese teaching sheet
in Chao romanization
1,486 views

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A System of Tone-Letters. Yuen Ren Chao. Leaves 1-5. Typescript (photocopy). Le Maître Phonétique, 3rd Series No. 30, 1930 (Note 2)

Full Text Description

1 of 5

Chao, Tone-Letters -1-

A System of Tone-Letters¹
Yuen Ren Chao

Le Maître Phonétique, 3rd Series, No. 30, 1930

With a view to combine accuracy, elegance, and convenience for printing, I have devised the following system of "tone-letters" for the consideration of fellow phoneticians.

Each tone-letter consists of a vertical line, of the height of an *n*, to which a simplified time-pitch curve of the tone represented is attached, for tonemes to the left of the line, and for tone-values to its right. The thickness of the line is to be the same as the horizontal (thin) elements of a roman character.

The total range is divided into four equal parts, thus making five points, numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, corresponding to low, half-low, medium, half-high, high, respectively. In order not to make distinctions too fine, points 2 and 4 are used either alone or with each other, but not in combination with 1, 3, or 5. With this restriction, the total numbers of tone-letters which

A Preliminary Study of English Intonation (with American Variants) and its Chinese Equivalents. By Y. R. Chao. 1932. Leaves [2], 105-150 (photocopy). Reprinted from the Tsai Yuen Pei Anniversary Volume (Supplementary volume I of the Bulletin of the Inst

Suggest

2nd Runner-up

Yuen Ren Chao's A System of Tone-Letters
809 views

Looking Ahead

The collection provides new opportunities for research, collaboration, and discovery across disciplines and borders.

FOR RESEARCHERS | THEMES THE COLLECTION OPENS UP



Dialogue across civilizations

Cultural and musical exchange between East and West



The Chao family legacy

A distinguished lineage within the Chinese literati tradition



Foundations of ethnomusicology

The emerging study of music, with a focus on Asian traditions



Instrument histories

Stories behind the collection's instruments



Diaspora life

Chinese life and culture in the United States

FOR THE LIBRARY | OUR NEXT STEP



AI-driven digital restoration

Enhancing resolution and quality of the video materials

Proposed "AI-Driven Digital Restoration of Embodied Martial Arts Cultural Heritage through the Praying Mantis Master Wong Hon Fan Collection"



"Hopefully my donation would also facilitate donation of similar kinds, thereby creating an open and comprehensive collection on Chinese music and related arts."

— Professor Rulan Chao Pian, 2006

Project Benefits – Bringing the East and West in music connection



Thank You!

I wish to convey my appreciation to the individuals listed below who have played a role in the development of the presentation:

Ryun Lee, Vincent Lum, Chiyuri Lai from CUHK and Wendy Wong (formerly CUHK)

