

University of Adelaide  
Elder Conservatorium of Music  
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**Portfolio of  
Original Compositions and Exegesis:  
To Fuse or To Confront – Five Compositions for  
Chinese Traditional and Western  
Orchestral Instruments**

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**Volume I**

**Portfolio of Compositions**

**Volume II**

**Exegesis**

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for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

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**Volume I**  
**Portfolio of Compositions**

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## Volume II

### Exegesis

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## **Abstract**

This Ph.D. research explores the blending Chinese and western musical idioms. Research questions include: What are the criteria for choosing a new context for confronting the western and Chinese idioms? What is the aesthetic behind this new context in terms of sound quality? What particular compositional techniques are the best in the new context? How can structural coherence be maintained within the chosen aesthetic?

The submission consists of a portfolio comprising five compositions for Chinese traditional instruments together with western orchestral instruments and an Exegesis. The five compositions are: Five Studies for Three Instruments, A Character Piece, A Little Suite, Cycles of Destiny and Concerto Grosso for *sheng*, *erhu* and *pipa*. The aim of this portfolio is to explore possibilities for blending Chinese and western musical idioms through the compositional techniques of mosaic progression and juxtaposition. It examines the techniques in terms of the aesthetic standpoint, the confrontation of Chinese and western idioms as well as their application for structural coherence.

The portfolio consists of two volumes. Volume One presents the scores of the compositions with each one paginated separately. Volume Two presents the Exegesis which discusses significant technical features of the compositions. Three of the five compositions from the portfolio are recorded on a CD which accompanies this portfolio, namely, Five Studies for Three Instruments, A Little Suite and Cycles of Destiny. This CD should be of assistance in providing a clear impression of the music represented in the portfolio.

## **Declaration**

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution, and to the best of my knowledge and belief contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text of the thesis.

I give my consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for photocopying and loan, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968 except for the compact disc which may not be duplicated and must be listened to in the Music Library only.

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Raymond Mok

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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I am grateful to many people for help received in the course of working on this portfolio. Alas, I can list only a few.

My sincere gratitude is expressed particularly to my Principal Supervisor Dr. Graeme Koehne and to Co-supervisors Dr. Kimi Coaldrake and Mr. Stephen Whittington. Their supervision and encouragement are extremely precious to me. Without it, I would not have been able to complete this portfolio. I am also indebted to Professor Charles Bodman Rae for his comments on my compositions and exegesis.

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I also wish to express my sincere thanks to Dr. Chan Hing-yan, Supervisor of my M.Phil. study from 1999-2000. He first guided me towards the blending western and Chinese idioms through the compositional techniques of mosaic progression as well as juxtaposition that I have enhanced in my Ph.D. study.

My thanks must also go to the performers of the Chinese Traditional Ensemble from the China Conservatory of Music, the Ensemble Eclipse of Beijing Central Conservatory of Music, the Ensemble of Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra and Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, who performed in the recordings on the CD which accompanies this submission.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks to my family for their support in seeing me through my postgraduate study.

## List of Works

<u>Name</u>	<u>Instrumentation</u>	<u>Movements</u>	<u>Duration</u>
1) Five Studies for Three Instruments	<i>Huqin</i> , piano, percussion	5	ca. 17 mins.
2) A Character Piece	<i>Sheng</i> , percussion, strings	1	ca. 15 mins.
3) A Little Suite	Chinese flutes, <i>sheng</i> , <i>pipa</i> , percussion	5	ca. 19 mins.
4) Cycles of Destiny	Chinese symphonic orchestra	1	ca. 8 mins.
5) Concerto Grosso for <i>sheng</i> , <i>erhu</i> and <i>pipa</i>	Symphonic orchestra	5	ca. 30 mins.
Total Time			ca. 89 mins.

## Contents for Compact Disc

Recordings on the accompanying CD are made from live performances, A Character Piece and *Concerto Grosso* for *sheng*, *erhu* and *pipa* have not been included on the CD.

Track	Title	Duration
1-5	Five Studies for Three Instruments	17 mins
6-10	A Little Suite (Recorded at Beijing Modern Music Festival, 02/06/2007)	16 mins
11-15	A Little Suite (Recorded at The International Society for Contemporary Music 24/11/ 2007)	19 mins
16	Cycles of Destiny	8 mins

### Performers:

Five Studies for Three Instruments

Zhang Zun Lian - *huqin*  
Li Min - piano  
Gao Shan - percussion

A Little Suite  
(Beijing Modern Music Festival 2007)

Yang Fan – Chinese flutes  
Wang Lei – *sheng*  
Lan Wei Wei – *pipa*  
Wang Shuai - percussion



A Little Suite  
(ISCM 2007)

Sun Yong Zhi – Chinese flutes  
Cheng Tak Wai – *sheng*  
Zhang Ying – *pipa*  
Liao Yi Ping – percussion  
Chew Hee Chiat - conductor

Cycles of Destiny

Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra  
Yan Hui Chang - conductor